THE Nation

AMERICA'S LEADING LIBERAL WEEKLY SINCE 1865

VOLUME 150 NEW YORK · SATURDAY · MAY 25, 1940 NUMBER 21

The Shape of Things

TODAY, MAY 21, AN EARLY BERLIN CABLE claims that German mechanized columns swinging sharply west have entered Abbeville at the head of the Somme estuary and hence are practically at the Channel. If this advance is confirmed and the German hold consolidated, the British and Belgian forces in Flanders will be sewed up in a gigantic pocket unable to retreat except by sea. The situation looks extremely dangerous unless the French army, which seems to have checked the drive against Paris, can gather its strength for an immediate counter-blow. The rapidity of the Nazis' drive must have left weak spots in their lines. Can General Weygand find these spots and hurl in sufficient forces with sufficient momentum to endanger the German right and compel it to pull back from the Channel? The bold decision to retire Gamelin, apostle of the defensive, and replace him with the veteran Weygand and the somber defiance of Premier Churchill's speech on Sunday are both signs of the change of mood in Britain and France. New energy and desperate determination have been born of imminent peril; we trust not too late.

*

FOR EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW DAYS HAVE changed the face of Western Europe. In these days Holland's government, its Queen, and the royal family have fled as refugees to England; its army has capitulated. Hitler has appointed Seyss-Inquart, Austria's Nazi traitor, as Reich Commissioner to govern the Netherlands. Belgium is two-thirds conquered: Brussels and Antwerp have fallen, the government has moved to Dunkirk, and the army with its Allied supporters is fighting in the extreme western corner of the country. The small provinces of Malmedy, Eupen, and Moresnet have been incorporated in the Reich. In these few days the German army has stormed and bombed a wedge into French territory through the northern extension of the Maginot line between Montmédy and Mauberge, thrusting forward well beyond St. Quentin. Holland conquered, Belgium two-thirds conquered, France invaded—all this in a week in spite of desperate, courageous resistance. Why did it happen? This can be easily told. The German armies, like the German nation, have been prepared for war, and for nothing but war. The command is unified, single-minded, animated by blazing determination. It applies the latest machinery of killing with brilliant ingenuity, not mechanically. The entire strategy is focused on two things—invasion and conquest. Tactics are geared to two ideas—power and speed.

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THE ALLIES DID NOT EXPECT TO FACE A mechanized invasion across open country, and there is no doubt that the morale of the troops was at least temporarily shaken by the furious attacks of hundreds of dive bombers dropping their shattering projectiles and then wheeling and returning to machine-gun again and again the helpless foot soldiers. The onslaught of fast tanks breathing fire one hundred yards ahead as they charged added to the terror. All reports insist that Allied morale was wholly restored "after the first few attacks," but it is clear that the Germans gained a great initial advantage. It is reported, too, that the French command is taking strong measures to rid the army of fifth-column elements; this may refer to Nazi sympathizers in the ranks, but it may also refer to Communists, some of whom continue even at the front to regard the war as primarily an imperialist struggle. Presumably Weygand will remove such obstructions with speed and thoroughness rather than mercy. The need of prompt, unfaltering counter-attack is recognized. A war of aggressive thrusts is the only possible rebuttal to Hitler's tactics. For the Germans cannot halt. They must win or collapse.

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IF CHARLES LINDBERGH WANTS TO PREACH American isolation, that is his privilege. But in giving the nation the benefit of his advice last week the Colonel went beyond the bounds of argument to attribute motives and assign responsibilities. It is his thesis that the danger to America comes from those guilty of "meddling with affairs abroad," and since he brands these persons ("a small minority of the American people but they

Published weekly and copyright, 1940, in the U. S. A. by The Nation, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter, December 13, 1897, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1897.

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control much of the machinery of influence and propaganda") as "elements of personal profit and foreign interest," it is not impertinent to consider the interests which the Colonel himself has been serving. For he has not always been opposed to "meddling with affairs abroad." Last fall, when there was still a strong possibility of calling off the war, Colonel Lindbergh pleaded for peace so that the "white race" could rebuild its ramparts against both "the infiltration of inferior blood" and the Asiatic hordes already "pressing toward us on the Russian border." Far from being self-sufficient, Americans were to have a real part in these "affairs abroad"; indeed, civilization itself, said the Colonel, depends "on an English fleet, a German air force, a French army, and an American nation, standing together as guardians of our common heritage, sharing strength, dividing influence." But all that brave dream was predicated on hordes of barbarism "pressing toward us on the *Russian* border." When hordes not only press on the *German* border but spill out over Western Europe to the English Channel, the Colonel reproves Americans for "this hysterical chatter of calamity." Nazi hordes, apparently, are not barbaric enough to worry Colonel Lindbergh.

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BLUEPRINTS FOR THE 1940 PRESIDENTIAL campaign have been all but trampled into illegibility by the boots of Hitler's soldiery, and many of them will have to be scrapped. It was assumed all along, of course, that the war would have a profound bearing on the outcome of the elections, but the coming of total war has turned the whole campaign on its head. Three weeks from the date of their convention, the Republicans find themselves confronted not only with the practical certainty that they will have Roosevelt to fight again but also with a swiftly growing split in their ranks over foreign policy. Headed by Colonel Frank Knox, the party's vice-presidential candidate in 1936, great numbers of Republicans are stampeding toward the Roosevelt policy of giving all possible aid to the Allies short of entering the war. Knox himself is believed ready to accept a place in the Roosevelt Cabinet as Secretary of the Navy, succeeding Charles Edison, and there is much talk of a "coalition Cabinet." Such a coalition would be tantamount to a Republican surrender in a year in which the elephant was conceded a fighting chance, and the heads of the party naturally decry ideas of this kind. But the party cannot afford to take in June a strong isolationist stand which it might well feel forced to abandon by November, and even less can it afford to have a free-for-all in Philadelphia. Along with the weird talk of coalition, therefore, looms the possibility that the hard-pressed Republicans may postpone their convention until the fall. Since Roosevelt has already expressed a desire to put off the Democratic convention, we may witness the spectacle of a campaign in which the Republican contender, worn to a frazzle by a summer of dreadful uncertainty, has six weeks to head off a man whom outstanding Republicans are even now prepared to follow.

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CERTAIN MEMBERS OF CONGRESS APPEAR prepared to burn down the Constitution in order to get rid of Harry Bridges. A bill introduced by Congressman Leland M. Ford of California would make an alien deportable who by word or act showed himself "sympathetic with . . . associated with, or affiliated with . . . communistic individuals or organizations . . . in the interference with the good order and happiness of any local community." This was too silly even for the anti-Bridges faction, and the bill has been mercifully buried in committee. More dangerous to the Constitution is one introduced by Congressman Leonard A. Allen of Louisiana, providing specifically for the deportation of Harry Bridges. Since this is a private bill and therefore requires unanimous consent, we cannot believe that it will pass. But before this sort of thing spreads we should like to point out that there could be nothing more contrary to the Constitution. For Congress to pass a bill condemning a man to deportation is to violate separation of powers and to encroach on the judicial function. This is what is known in English law as a bill of attainder. Bills of this kind, first employed under Tudor despotism in the fifteenth century, are defined by the Encyclopedia Britannica as a "species of extrajudicial procedure, for the direct punishment of political offenses." Trial and evidence were unnecessary. Henry VIII found bills of attainder useful in getting rid of those he could not hope to convict in a court of law. Bridges has been tried and found not deportable. In case some Congressmen would like to use Henry VIII tactics, we call their attention to Subsection 3, Section 9, Article I, of the Constitution. It forbids Congress to pass a bill of attainder. The Allen bill is enough to make the Founding Fathers turn over in their graves.

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THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY, MEETING IN annual conference immediately after the formation of the new Churchill government, approved by an overwhelming majority the participation of its leaders in the Cabinet. A small section protested that the "working classes were being dragged into a conflict between rival capitalisms"—a view which Clement Attlee, now Lord Privy Seal, rejected as "claptrap" with the evident approval of the conference as a whole. The government has been rounded out with the appointment of a large number of subordinate ministers, and altogether sixteen posts have gone to the Labor Party. Ernest Bevin, able, energetic, and sometimes ruthless "boss" of the Transport Workers, Britain's largest trade union, has been

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chosen as Minister of Labor. Hugh Dalton, an economist, who served as Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the last Labor government, will head the Ministry of Economic Warfare. An unexpected selection is that of Lord Beaverbrook to take charge of a newly created Department of Aircraft Production. One of Britain's chief press magnates, Beaverbrook until the outbreak of war was both a crusader for British isolation and a critic of the government's air policy. Now he is slated to speed up the output of planes at a time when Britain's island security is threatened as never before. In reconstructing the government Mr. Churchill has cleared out a good deal of dead wood, but he has been forced to pay several political and personal debts. The elevation of Sir Kingsley Wood, a power inside the Tory organization, was probably a necessary concession. Less easy to explain, except on the basis of long friendship, is the choice of the fascist-minded Lord Lloyd as Colonial Secretary. The appointment of an old-line imperialist, Leopold Amery, as Secretary for India is also disturbing.

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THE REPORT THAT JAPAN IS SEEKING A truce in its three-year undeclared war against China bears the earmarks of authenticity in so far as it reflects Japanese policy. With the collapse of its recent major offensive in northern Hupeh and southern Honan, the Japanese army appears to have reached, for the moment at least, the limit of its striking power. A breathing spell would give it an opportunity to replenish its depleted reserve of munitions and permit it to consolidate its now shaky position in the chief occupied areas. A truce would also give Japan an opportunity to profit, both strategically and financially, from the European war, and thus alleviate domestic discontent. The Japanese have not forgotten the fabulous profits made in the last war. While it is not unreasonable to suppose that Japan would be willing to withdraw from a considerable portion of China in order to gain the foregoing advantages, it is difficult to see why the Chinese should accept such an offer. Chiang Kai-shek has every reason for carrying on the struggle, difficult though it may be. China's morale remains excellent; its military strength is greater than at the beginning of the war. Chungking has denied the report that informal peace talks are already under way at Hongkong, and unless new evidence is uncovered it would be well to accept this denial.

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NO DOUBT CHARGES OF INCONSISTENCY will be leveled at the Supreme Court because of its decision upholding the 1937 Guffey Act. Two weeks before, in the Madison Oil Trust case, Justice Douglas had ruled for the court that the Sherman Act forbade combinations of business men to fix prices. In the coal case Justice Douglas handed down an opinion permitting prices to be fixed by district boards under government control. Thus the court forbids price-fixing in the one case and permits it in the other. The distinction actually is quite simple. Price-fixing by business combinations is illegal because Congress made it so in enacting the Sherman Act. Congress, in the exercise of its power over interstate commerce, can decide otherwise when and where it chooses. "What Congress has forbidden by the Sherman Act it can modify," Justice Douglas said. "It may do so by placing the machinery of price-fixing in the hands of public agencies." The conclusion to be drawn by businesses that want price-fixing is that they should obtain "Guffey acts" of their own and then gain control of the price-fixing boards. This not too attractive prospect may temper jubilation over another "liberal" decision by the Supreme Court.

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THE SAME MAIL BRINGS US A RELEASE FROM the Civil Rights Federation in Michigan and the "free speech" briefs filed by Messrs. Cravath, de Gersdorff, Swaine, and Wood in the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals on behalf of Henry Ford. Ford complains that the Labor Board has forbidden him to distribute leaflets among his employees urging them not to join a union. The Civil Rights Federation complains that a Dearborn ordinance restricts the distribution of leaflets in the vicinity of the Ford plant during the hours when Ford workers go to and from work, and prevents union organizers from giving them leaflets urging them to join a union. The Civil Rights Federation asks support for Councilman Clarence Doyle's campaign to repeal the ordinance. Ford, as Dearborn's largest taxpayer, is not without influence in its city government, but we do not recall that he ever objected to the leaflet ordinance or even to its predecessor, which forbade the distribution of any leaflets in Dearborn unless the City Clerk first approved their contents. To call national attention to the collapse of free speech and press in Dearborn at a time when Henry Ford is manfully protecting the Bill of Rights against the Labor Board seems a deplorable lack of tact.

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HEARINGS ON MIGRATORY FARM LABOR now being held by the La Follette committee represent more than a humane interest in a luckless portion of our population. Small farmers, freed from feudal tenures, contributed greatly to the development of our characteristic democratic and equalitarian ways. The changes which have been taking place in rural areas, by depriving large sections of our farm population of economic freedom and security, are a serious threat to the institutions these same areas did so much to nurture. We are developing a rural proletariat, and the Russian and

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Spanish examples remind us of the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary tinder that exists in landless and hungry rural masses. We can do no more at this time than point to the high lights of the testimony before the committee. More than half a million farms in this country consist of land so poor that no farmer can make a living on it no matter how hard he tries. At least 2,500,000 persons live on these pauper farms. The strange phenomenon of "farmers on relief" has made its appearance: at some time during the last seven years more than one out of every four farm families has required assistance from WPA or FSA. Equally new and strange is "unemployment on the farm": the 1937 Unemployment Census showed 1,500,000 farmers jobless. Steinbeck's Joads are a vivid symbol of a growing misery and unrest. The future of democracy in America may depend on our ability to cope with the problem they represent.

Supposing Hitler Wins

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

A GRIM game has become popular these days. It consists of thinking of all the things that will happen if Hitler wins the war. It is a game one can play by oneself, or with one's friends, or in a letter to the New York *Times,* or, if one has the luck, in an editorial column such as this.

What will happen to the United States if Hitler wins? people ask. And then they talk about Greenland and the West Indies and the Guianas. Or about navies and the possibility of long-distance invasion. Or about autarchy and foreign trade. Or about political freedom.

What will happen to the British Empire? That is another favorite starting-point. And they discuss India and Singapore and Hongkong. Or the position of the dominions and the relations between Canada and the United States. Or the British fleet.

Less commonly the game is played about Europe. What will happen to Europe if Hitler conquers Europe? Hitler has been conquering Europe for years, and the game has become almost tiresome. The answers have already been made—in Spain and Czechoslovakia and Poland. But in these last few days and nights I have found myself stating over again the questions and the too obvious answers in terms of England and of France, especially of England.

I play the game with small pieces. I think about people, and ways of considering and doing things. About Chamberlain, for instance, and Bonnet. What will happen to them if Hitler wins? And I decide immediately. Both of them will be put in concentration camps. That they are reactionaries won't help them. Their past services to the Nazis won't save them. In the end they turned against the bearers of the New Europe and so they must be crushed. (I remember Schuschnigg; where is Schuschnigg now?) Of course they may be spared if they bow to the logic of fascist conquest (I remember Hacha and Sirovy) and help to rule according to the Nazi pattern. Chamberlain won't do that, I decide. He is too stubborn. But Bonnet might serve the Nazis; I rather imagine he will.

I think about many other leaders. Churchill will be killed. The Nazis will kill him and then announce that he was accidentally shot while trying to escape. But nobody will believe that lie. The Labor men will be killed or buried in concentration camps, those who cannot escape. I'm not sure about the Communists. Hitler will be afraid of them in spite of their services during the present struggle; but he will be afraid of Russia, too. I think he will preserve the Communists, and watch them.

I think about the governments of Britain and France. Hitler, I decide, will permit them to be "independent." That will mean that they will be run by approved English and French fascists and that the parliaments will be suppressed in both countries. Mosley deserves the job of Top Fascist in England, but if he gets it he won't hold it long. He is too proud and self-willed. Hitler will soon replace him with a man who will better understand Britain's future role.

I think a lot about other organizations in France and Britain; in Britain particularly. It is a country that loves committees and societies. Bird-lovers and people interested in the Balkans; birth-controllers and vegetarians; all the groups that insert notices in the *New Statesman and Nation;* they will go, because they will not fit in an England that fits in the New Europe. More still I think about the French and British labor organizations, and the British-Labor Party most of all. They will dissolve with the liquidation of their leaders. And I realize, suddenly, as I consider their end, how much of England is encompassed, for me, in the stodgy, ineffective, compromising, and generally decent democracy of the British Labor Party.

I think about the schools and universities of France and Britain, teaching ways of thinking that can have no meaning if Hitler wins. I think about Huxley and Hogben and Bernal. I think about the press—the vivid, venal press of France; the solid, free journals of England. I think of the weeklies—the *New Statesman and Nation,* bold and honest and effective; the *Spectator,* that should be dull and stuffy because it is conservative, but manages to be brilliant. I think of the *Countryman;* I try to imagine the *Countryman* in Hitler's England. It would run articles on Diplomacy and Boar Shooting. I think of the end of the great free press of Britain . . .

And the books and the art, the authors and the painters. Will Shaw be preserved in some fascist museum for his childish sins against democracy? Wells may

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escape to America. James Joyce will die in France. Malraux will die fighting.

Will all the books be burned? Will Western learning and Western thought crumble in the flames of a thousand bonfires in the squares of France and England? Probably not. The Nazis have a nice eye for the commercial value of forbidden things. They burn samples, not collections. The literature of France and Britain and their forbidden art are not as likely to be destroyed as they are to be locked up. Learning and beauty will become museum pieces, and the museum will be closed to the public.

I think about the Jews of Britain and France, and of all Europe . . .

But the game at last becomes unbearable. It is not possible for the sane mind long to contemplate the end of sanity. These things must not happen. That they can happen and indeed may happen is not an answer that we know how to tolerate.

Essentials of Defense

PROOF of the falsity of the statement that neither the war nor its outcome was any concern of ours has been provided once and for all by the spontaneous alarm felt throughout the country as soon as it was realized that a rapid Allied defeat was by no means impossible. Had fortunes on the western front been reversed, we would have experienced no tremors. No Allied triumph would have stirred us into a reexamination of our own defenses. But the prospect of a Nazi domination of Europe conjures up in our minds such visions of immediate and tangible dangers to vital American interests that we accept almost unanimously the grim necessity of adding huge amounts to already heavy defense expenditures.

The first moral to be drawn is plain: even though we do not enter the war, common sense demands that everything possible be done to bolster the western front by making available to the Allies food, raw materials, and the products of our industries. For this reason, the outstanding sentence in the President's message on defense last week was his request to Congress not "to take any action which would in any way hamper or delay the delivery of American-made planes to foreign nations which have ordered them or seek to purchase more planes."

Subject to this all-important proviso, Mr. Roosevelt asked for immediate appropriations and authorizations totaling $1,182,000,000, and Congress, accepting his estimate of the situation, went to work with unparalleled haste to carry out his wishes. Much as *The Nation* dislikes the thought of diverting useful resources to so unproductive a task as rearmament, it agrees with the President that our defense policy must take into account the dangers arising from the new turn of events in Europe. At the same time, it is necessary to point out that there is a great deal more to defense than the mere appropriation of large sums of money. If this is to be spent wisely, a far greater degree of correlation in the direction of our armed forces than has yet been achieved is absolutely essential.

To begin with, there is need for much greater precision about the lines we are going to defend. There could be no attack on these shores unless an enemy had first established naval and air bases within striking distance. But as Mr. Roosevelt made clear in his message, the increased range of modern planes has greatly enlarged the area which our defense plans must take into consideration. The general principle that we are vitally concerned with the integrity of any state in the Western Hemisphere is perhaps sufficiently established, and it can almost be taken for granted that we would not permit a potential enemy to gain a foothold in any of the Caribbean islands. But what about Bermuda, Iceland, the Azores, and the Cape Verde Islands? How far are we prepared to go to prevent such territories from being converted into bases which might be used against the Americas? And to what extent are we willing to defend trade routes which connect us with sources of vital raw materials? These are questions which demand answers before we can decide the amounts and types of armament needed. Nor can such questions be left to military and naval officers, for they involve matters of high policy which are the responsibility of the government as a whole.

For this reason we are sorry that Mr. Roosevelt has cold-shouldered proposals for a bi-partisan committee on national defense. There is a real need for such a body, which should be headed by the President himself, both to pass on major strategic objectives and to provide for the coordination of the different services and for the efficient organization of supplies. In order to provide the necessary technical advice a general-defense staff, representing both army and navy, is also essential. We should heed the lesson of Great Britain's experience in keeping its defense services in too watertight compartments.

Another field in which a greater degree of coordination is desirable is that of procurement of supplies, especially aircraft. Under the stimulus of Allied orders the productive capacity of the industry has expanded considerably and is now estimated at about 12,000 units a year. But actual production at the present time is at the rate of only about 5,000 units, and while some plants are fully employed, others are half idle. If we are to raise production rapidly to anything like the 50,000 annual capacity at which Mr. Roosevelt says we should aim, a high degree of cooperation within the industry will be necessary. It will be essential to select a small number of types and to devote one or more plants completely to each

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type. Only in this way can the benefits of mass production become available. Concentration of this kind implies willingness on the part of the various aircraft manufacturing companies to make sub-contracting agreements with one another. It would be the task of a coordinator of aircraft supply to promote such agreements, to make sure that there was a steady flow of tools, parts, and materials, and to enlarge bottle-necks which threaten to slow up production.

These matters, while highly important, are technical and should not prove beyond the industrial genius of this country. But if our defenses are to be put on a really efficient basis, it is even more vital to promote unity and the cooperative spirit between the different elements in the nation on whose labors success depends. It is disturbing, therefore, to find that the present emergency is being seized on in some quarters as a handy argument for modifying or even destroying safeguards which the workers have belatedly won under the New Deal. There are voices calling for amendment of the wage-hour law and the Walsh-Healey Act, and for drastic economies at the expense of the WPA. The same voices declare that the rapid increase in production required for defense can only be provided by full reliance on private enterprise. That may be so, though we have found that in building the navy, private enterprise has lost few opportunities of skinning the Treasury. However, we ought not to permit the protection of the workers to be diminished while making possible the enlargement of profits. We shall not build our defenses by adding to social injustice. Rather, while mending our ramparts against external foes, we must diligently work to eradicate the causes of social tension which threaten our democracy from within.

White-Collar Salaries

THOUGH the wages of workers in industry have been rather thoroughly investigated, comparatively little has been known until recently about the salary scales of white-collar workers. To a large extent this lack of information has been the result of employer policies. Wage schedules such as exist for manual workers are rarely found, and many employers have sought to conceal the essentially capricious basis on which salaries are fixed by a policy of strict secrecy about the compensation of individuals. The rule has not always been rigidly enforced, but white-collar employees are usually reticent about discussing their salaries.

The unfortunate results are clearly demonstrated in the survey of salaries in the book-publishing industry just released by the Book and Magazine Guild—the first such ever made. All of the thirty-six firms covered by the report are located in New York, where salaries are well above the average. The survey reveals tremendous variation not only between firms, but for a given type of work within a single establishment. There seem to be no accepted standards for beginning salaries, increases, advancement, or bonuses. Stock and shipping clerks vary from $12 to $28 a week; switchboard operators receive from $14 to $30 a week; and assistants in the production, advertising, and editorial departments get from $18 to $70 a week. Beginning salaries for stenographers vary from $17 to $32. The situation with regard to increases seems little short of chaotic. Some employees after from five to eight years' service receive little more than the lowest beginning salary paid any employee. Only one-third of those who have been employed by the same firm five years or more have received increases of more than $10 a week. Practically a third of all the employees have never received a raise, or have had their wages cut. Some of these discrepancies may be accounted for by differences in individual ability, but in many instances no such explanation seems possible.

Although presumably the white-collar workers in the publishing firms are better trained and are at least as efficient in their jobs as manual workers in the printing trades, their salaries fall far below the wages paid union printers. As against an average salary of $26.94 for employees in the editorial, business, and advertising offices, the New York union scale is $54.48 a week for compositors, $64.32 for electrotypers, and $64.80 for pressmen. Part of this difference may be accounted for by discrimination against women, since four-fifths of the employees of the publishing houses are women. The extent of this discrimination may be seen from the fact that the average salary for men editors, editorial assistants, and proofreaders is $47.22 a week, while the average for women in the same category is only $26.17. Men tend in general to occupy the more responsible positions and to be favored in advancement. But even for the same work, women's average salaries are materially lower than those of men.

It may also be that office employees of publishing houses, despite their superior training, are expected to be content with lower wages than printers and typesetters because of the prestige of their positions and the vague chance of advancing to executive positions that pay somewhat better than the top posts open to workers in the printing trades. But the difference in compensation is probably due chiefly to the differing strength of unionization in the two fields. Printers have long been well organized and have succeeded not only in achieving a high wage scale but in bringing about standardized conditions. In contrast, the publishing industry remains relatively unorganized despite the Book and Magazine Guild's success in signing contracts with some sixteen individual firms.

Although the specific findings of the Book and Maga-

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zine Guild's study are applicable only to a fairly restricted industry, there is no reason to believe that the employees of publishing houses are paid less, or are more unfairly treated, than hundreds of thousands of office workers throughout the country. Further studies of this kind are badly needed as a step toward improving the status of white-collar employees in every field.

British Labor Expects. . .

BY HAROLD J. LASKI

London, May 17, by Cable

THE Labor Party conference was almost unanimous in its decision to enter the Churchill government. It had, indeed, no moral alternative. The gravity of the crisis and the responsibility it bore for the defeat of Mr. Chamberlain made its full partnership inescapable. The personnel of the government is not from a Labor standpoint all that it might be. A price has always to be paid for coalitions. But Hoare has gone, Simon is permanently sidetracked, Chamberlain is bound hand and foot in the War Cabinet by men who are against appeasement in any shape or form. The three pivotal economic positions in the Ministry are held by Labor. Behind their occupants is the solid support of the trade unions. These are gains of an immense kind. They mean that Labor dominates the economic organization for the conduct of the war. That is not all. Attlee and Greenwood are aware that the conference stands firmly by its Socialist principles both in the domestic and the international field. They will be expected to press with all their strength for the acceptance of those principles; they will be judged by the degree to which they succeed in securing their application.

Labor expects an agreement with India. It expects a new approach to the problem of Soviet relations. It expects a wholesale reorganization of the economic front on the bases, one, of a full use of man power under full national control and, two, of rigorous equality of sacrifice in the real meaning of the term. It expects to see large-scale social reforms *during the war*—in public health and education and in the treatment of the aged and of soldiers and their dependents. It expects to see full preparation for immense reconstruction after the armistice.

These things must begin now. They are part of the capacity to show that the new government can enlist the whole spirit of the nation for the defeat of Hitler. They are the proof that Labor, as a full partner, can recover the dynamic spirit of democracy. The peace aims of the party stand. It is for a full victory. Hitlerism must be unmistakably defeated. But there must be no peace of revenge. There must be an end to the sovereignty of the state. There must be a new world order which, by making aggression impossible, makes the struggle for armaments unnecessary. The party is clear that the coalition government continues only as long as it accepts these purposes—as a government representative of a nation united for victory. That capacity ceases when victory is won, or the moment that any of the essential principles of the Labor movement are denied by the non-Socialist members of the government. The Labor Party would have destroyed any claim to the respect of the nation had it refused responsibility in this historic moment. It is not merely that the nation is fighting for its life; it is, as the conference said, that the alternative to victory is the reduction of France and Britain to the position of slave states under the heel of Hitler. British public opinion has called upon Labor to share in these decisions upon which our fate depends. By helping to organize victory now it has a great opportunity to win power for socialism once the victory is won. And though we shall pass through grim hours in the next month, we know that in the end victory will be ours. Out of that victory we shall take the power to start building the first democratic socialist state in the modern world.

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Defense Harmony

BY CHARLES MALCOLMSON

Washington, May 21

NOT since the honeymoon of 1933 has there been such an outburst of acclaim and activity on Capitol Hill as followed President Roosevelt's request for $1,182,000,000 in emergency defense funds. Timed to perfection, the President's message caught the legislators staggering from the impact of the Nazi invasion of the Low Countries, and their almost unanimous reaction was a resolve to prove that democracy could do a little blitzkrieging of its own. For a while the leaders were even talking of rushing the whole program through in forty-eight hours; they later compromised on a streamlined "regular order" that has kept committees and subcommittees stepping all over one another in their haste to approve various sections of the program. As a result, if the $896,000,000 in appropriations and $286,000,000 in authorizations have not been voted and sent to the White House by the time this is in print, they will be on their way very shortly.

The President plans to attack the problem of expanding our national-defense facilities on four fronts by (1) purchasing equipment for an army of 1,000,000 men, (2) replacing outmoded military and naval material, (3) increasing munitions production, (4) vastly stepping up armament, particularly airplane, manufacture. To expedite this last he requested a special $200,000,000 appropriation to be expended at his discretion, explaining only that the money is to be used largely for "increasing production of airplanes and anti-aircraft guns and the training of additional personnel for these weapons." The badly demoralized Republicans and isolationists have been hoping vaguely to stir up opposition to this "blank check" proviso, but even the most sanguine expect their protests to be brushed aside. There is plenty of precedent for such a request anyway, Congress in 1917 having voted Woodrow Wilson a similar fund.

The President placed great emphasis upon the need for rapid expansion of airplane production and expressed the hope that the industry could be "geared up to the ability to turn out at least 50,000 planes a year." There is no doubt this goal can be reached under his plan to establish inland a score or more plane factories with government financing. The question is, how soon? Our top production right now is about 12,000 planes a year. The most rational estimate is that a good eighteen months will be needed to double it, making November, 1941, the earliest deadline for a production rate of 25,000 to 30,000 planes per year. Some private aviation experts here, however, insist that with government help and assembly-line methods the 50,000-per-year rate can be attained by January, 1942.

Two extremely significant legislative by-products have resulted from the President's program. The first is the serious consideration being given the demand, put in the form of a resolution by Senator Lodge, that a bipartisan Congressional committee explore the whole subject of national defense. The second is a proposal, advanced by Senator Walsh and indorsed by leaders at both ends of the Capitol, that during the emergency Congress relax the provisions of certain "restrictive" legislation, notably the Walsh-Healey Act and the wage-hour law. The demand for an investigation of our national-defense program and of the army and navy bureaucracy has been getting up steam for some time. At the moment the Administration is looking pointedly in the other direction, but there is a chance that just such an inquiry will be undertaken. There are a thousand questions which should be answered, such as why the army has only *one* ninety-millimeter anti-aircraft gun and only a handful of less effective types, or why the navy has stubbornly refused to adopt high-pressure steam boilers. And Congress only recently has come to suspect that the new Garand semi-automatic rifle isn't all it has been supposed.

Equally serious is the threatened sabotage, under the guise of war emergency, of most of the New Deal's labor legislation. Congressional leaders are looking favorably upon the suggestion that the hours limitations in the Walsh-Healey and wage-hour laws be relaxed in the interest of production speed-up. Incidentally, the same shipbuilding interests which initiated these proposals in testimony before the Senate Naval Affairs Committee also advocated "removal" of restrictions in both the Vinson-Trammel Act—limiting profits to 10 per cent—and the Wagner Act. While there is no immediate danger that Congress will go to quite such lengths during its current case of war jitters, unquestionably the President's program has supplied reactionaries with an excuse for renewing their assault on labor legislation.

At the same time, the centering of Congressional attention on national defense has served one good purpose: it has greatly relieved pressure for passage of other measures, notably the Walter-Logan bill and the NLRB amendments. Except for the emergency relief bill, which goes to the Senate this week just as the President requested it—$975,000,000 for WPA over an eight-month period—there now appears to be a good chance that no other major legislation will be enacted

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by Congress this session. (Also excepted, of course, are the army and navy supply bills, which are being revised to include portions of the emergency defense program.)

The Walter-Logan bill, aimed—in the words of Congressman Gene Cox—to "get" the Labor Board, the Wage-Hour Division, and the SEC, has run up against solid Senate opposition that promises to defeat it. The measure faces a Presidential veto, anyway. House reactionaries have about given up on the Wagner Act amendments, both those proposed by the Smith committee and the "milder" Norton version. They fear, not without reason, a repetition of the fiasco which followed House consideration of the Barden wage-hour amendments a few weeks ago. These were tangled up with so many "flypaper" amendments that the House joyfully sent the resultant mess back to committee. Liberal forces are plotting precisely the same tactics in the event the Smith or Norton bill reaches the floor; and with the Republicans inclined to wash their hands of the whole business, any real effort to force the issue is unlikely.

Hatch Bill No. 2 is still buried in the House Judiciary Committee, where Chairman Sumners, despite the prod of a discharge petition, intends to sit on it as long as possible. There are some ironic touches to this situation. The President, who was dead against Hatch Bill No. 1, strongly favors the companion piece. So do the Republican leadership in Congress and a sizable block of Democrats. But both national chairmen, John Hamilton and Jim Farley, are vigorously and actively opposed. The most effective opposition comes, however, from the bloc of Southern Democrats who, oozing political high-mindedness, last year denounced the President for his failure to back Hatch Bill No. 1. The shoe, transferred to the other foot, is pinching. There is still a fifty-fifty chance that the measure will go through.

The one good laugh of a pretty lugubrious session is being supplied by the House didos over the housing bill. This is the measure that passed the Senate last year with provision for $800,000,000 in USHA loans, only to have a combination of Republicans and Southern Democrats—the latter headed by breast-beating Gene Cox—block House consideration. Now a compromise has been effected to swing the farm bloc into line—a $500,000,000 program with $200,000,000 devoted to rural projects—and overnight Georgia's Gene has become a wild-eyed booster of federal housing. He has even offered to lead the floor fight for the compromise measure. The other day when Republicans accused Housing Administrator Nathan Straus of lobbying in Capitol corridors for the bill, Cox leaped to his feet bursting with outraged dignity. "I'll have you know," he bellowed at the flabbergasted hecklers across the aisle, "that Mr. Straus has every right to be here. In fact, he is here at my invitation!"

Murder Monopoly

I. THE INSIDE STORY OF A CRIME TRUST

BY JOSEPH FREEMAN

AGAINST a background of violence, sensation, and sadism—all tending to obscure its real import—Brooklyn's District Attorney, William O'Dwyer, has run to earth a criminal network which puts in the shade the great racketeering organizations of a generation ago. "Murder, Inc.," is journalese for the ring, and the name is an inspiration; it shows that to some extent at least the press has caught the meaning of Mr. O'Dwyer's discovery: that crime, like business, has outgrown the forms of rugged individualism and moved on to the greater glories of monopoly. Confessions by leaders of Murder, Inc.—its own name for itself is "the Combination"—show that it is a nation-wide, highly organized business which operates major rackets from coast to coast, trains its personnel, has its own code of conduct, and kills on contract. It is a grotesque caricature of American big business, and its ramifications are almost as ~~ are by-products of widespread business operations in-

recognize the racketeer as a functionary of American society—though they may not be aware of the extent to which his activities center in Murder, Inc.

Today it is almost impossible for a gangster, big or small, to conduct an independent racket. Whether he runs a policy game which nets him millions or a peanut machine which brings him in $30 a week, he can work his racket only with the permission of the Combination. The leaders grant each racketeer his territory, just as an automobile manufacturer grants a dealer his territory. If a racketeer leaves New York for Chicago, he can set up in business only with the consent of the Chicago leader of Murder, Inc. Similarly, no murder can be committed without the okay of the boss of the zone. The boss even reserves the right to choose the killers.

The killings—and they are numbered by the score—

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control over gambling, prostitution, the illicit traffic in narcotics, the policy game, bootlegging, and the loan-shark racket, to cite its outstanding spheres of influence. By sheer force it also dominates certain trade-union locals, and has a financial stake in various night clubs and cabarets. It operates certain legitimate enterprises and muscles in on others, where it exacts tribute from business men by threats or use of violence. Through its control of slot machines it collects pennies and nickels even from the schoolchildren of the nation. And not least, through its connection with corrupt political machines, it plays an important and sinister role in urban politics. The Combination even has its own banking and credit system designed to lend racketeers money—at an exorbitant rate—with which to start in business. It protects the member racketeer against unauthorized rivals and punishes him when he violates the laws of Murder, Inc. The punishment is usually a violent and horrible death.

At the moment public attention is centered on the first trial which has come out of O'Dwyer's investigations. The defendants, Harry (Happy) Maione and Frank (the Dasher) Abbandando, are charged with killing a fellow-gangster named George Rudnick in 1937. The victim was wiped out because he had turned police informer. According to the prosecution, the defendants strangled Rudnick with a rope, perforated his head and other parts of his body with sixty-three jabs of an icepick, and, to make sure, bashed in his skull with a meat-chopper. Technically the trial is concerned with only one killing, but it is merely the opening gun against Murder, Inc. So far the prosecutor's investigations have shed light on fifty-six hitherto unsolved murders in New York, and he has leads, he told me, which will uncover the bodies of scores of men whose murders were not even recorded on the police blotters. He believes Murder, Inc., can explain the mysterious disappearance of Peter Panto, progressive waterfront union organizer, and of many other members of the waterfront union.

Although his work has just got under way, O'Dwyer has already forged links between various branches of Murder, Inc., in New York. He has related the Combination to Lepke and Gurrah's racketeering in the garment and fur industries, flour trucking, the bakery trade, and narcotics; to the gambling, bootlegging, extortion, and trucking rackets headed by Charles (Bug) Siegel and Meyer Lansky; to the prostitution, policy, loan-shark, and narcotic rackets of the Bronx heirs of Dutch Schultz, whose mob continues to do business as part of Murder, Inc.; and to the various criminal and political activities of the Brooklyn underworld headed by Albert Anastasia and Joe Adonis. From New York the lines lead to other cities and other big shots: to the Purple Gang of Detroit; to Frank Nitti, former aide of Al Capone, who now runs the rackets in Chicago and Miami; to Frank Costello, bos- [illegible] Goldberg of California, who is believed to be the biggest shot of them all.

Much of the information which enabled O'Dwyer to piece together the pattern of social decay that is Murder, Inc., has come from Abe (Kid Twist) Reles, now state's witness in the case against Maione and Abbandando. This slight, kinky-haired, brown-eyed gangster, with the flat nose, low wrinkled forehead, and heavy lips, began his criminal career in 1920, at the age of thirteen, as a professional racketeer of the prohibition era. He has been arrested forty-three times on every charge ranging from juvenile delinquency and disorderly conduct to murder (no less than five times), and in the course of the present trial has confessed to eighteen murders, six of which he calmly described on the witness stand. In all but five arrests Reles went scot free.

He is known in Brownsville as a cruel, sadistic slugger. His voice is harsh; the words come rapidly; the language is clipped, full of that underworld argot in which money is "sugar," confessing is "singing," and lending at high rates of interest is "shylocking." Behind this lingo are a shrewd, predatory mind and a strange rationale. Reles considers himself and his associates cool, calculating business men operating a vast enterprise.

"The Combination," he boasted to O'Dwyer, "is operated like the Lehman banks. It is practically one organization and spreads all over the country." Reles compares Murder, Inc., to a "tree with all its branches branched out," and in a less idyllic mood to the "airplane trust." He emphasizes that it extends from coast to coast, with headquarters in cities like New York, Chicago, New Orleans, Detroit, and Los Angeles. In the entire United States there are hundreds of thousands of people in the Combination, and in the five boroughs of New York alone there are several thousands. According to Reles, the nation-wide crime syndicate is an outgrowth of the fierce competition in the alcohol racket during the era of needled beer and bathtub gin. "There was no price regulation," Reles told O'Dwyer. "The rule was, I'll do you and you'll do me." Profits ran into the millions, and that was bound to create war. Prohibition gang shootings are now part of American legend, like the predatory excursions and killings of the frontier cattle rustlers. Reles looks back on that era with horror, but for other reasons than the public. He feels that machine-gun competition was in the long run unprofitable for the racketeer.

"Nobody cared how he moved around," he said. "I looked to kill you and you looked to kill me. Somebody did something out of the way and got shot, and then his friends went gunning for the man who did the killing, and *he* got shot. There was no sense in that. So the leaders of the mob said, Why not stop this crazy competition and go out and make money instead? So six or seven of the leaders got together and said, 'Boys, what's the use [illegible] each other? Let's put our heads together, all

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of us, so that there can't be a meeting without one another.' That's how they all got together, to make no fighting."

Reles claims that the crime trust was from the beginning organized on a nation-wide basis. Modern means of communication and transportation made this logical. The syndicate developed its own hierarchy. Gradations in income, power, and authority were based on original accumulations of capital. When prohibition went out, the gangs had to seek other sources of income—race tracks, cabarets, gambling joints, bordels, policy games, the corrupt sections of the labor movement, the fur and poultry industries, the trucking business. Everywhere the mobs "muscled in" and chiseled off "a piece."

The ordinary small-time mobster was in no position to muscle in. In crime, as in other modern enterprises, the day of the small entrepreneur was over. He might have "brains" as Reles put it, but "he didn't have a chance because he didn't have a dime." He needed capital or credit to start a racket. Failing that, he was forced to become a "worker" for wages, employed by the bigger racketeers. That is how the hierarchy started. In the prohibition era Tim Murphy, a witty Chicago labor racketeer, used to say that Smith and Wesson made all men equal. Now the racketeer with the money had the last word.

A gangster who wanted to run his own racket had to borrow money. He would go, let us say, to Henry (Dutch) Goldberg. During prohibition, Dutch had done quite well running beer; he had wiped out rivals and piled up millions. After the great show was over, he invested some of his money in legitimate distilleries. He also became, according to Reles, head of the Broadway syndicate known as the Big Six. Dutch Goldberg has a police record in New York of four convictions for grand larceny and manslaughter and has served time in Elmira and Sing Sing.

Secure in his millions, Dutch acted as banker for other racketeers; he financed gangsters who started various legitimate and illegitimate enterprises, and received in return a big slice of the racket. In the credit system of the crime trust Reles sees the operation of a natural law. "If you haven't got any money," he remarked philosophically to District Attorney O'Dwyer, "you can't go any place. So the main thing is, you must have money." It was this credit system which first gave wealthy racketeers like Dutch Goldberg, Frank Nitti, and Joe Adonis their leadership in the crime trust. After that, rule was maintained by rigid organization and discipline, with murder the ultimate instrument of control.

As Reles describes it, the racketeers in each zone are governed by an "inner circle" of overlords whose decisions are law. These are the big shots who direct the various "business" enterprises, arrange murders, and acquire heavy bank accounts. Below them are "vice-presidents," like Happy Maione, Pittsburgh Phil Strauss, who is to be tried separately for the Rudnick murder, and Abe Reles. The word "mob" is no longer used to designate the rank and file. They are now "troops" or, less glamorously, "punks," in the employ of the top men. Big shots operate in terms of profits—all the traffic will bear. Secondary leaders and punks work for wages. Reles emphatically denies that Murder, Inc., triggermen have committed murder for as little as $5. "That's just newspaper stuff," he says indignantly. "You don't get paid for that kind of work. When you kill, it's duty. When you work in a shop, and the boss wants you to do something, he doesn't say, 'I'll give you five or ten dollars.' He is paying you a salary, and you've got to do what he tells you." Similarly, the triggerman is on the pay roll of the Combination; any work he does is "part of the routine."

The salaries of Murder, Inc., employees vary from $100 to $250 a week. In addition, some of them are given small rackets of their own: running slot machines or collecting tribute from storekeepers and pool parlors. If the income from these is small, the "trooper" may keep it all: if it runs into real money, he has to kick back part of the take to gangsters higher up. Salaries are paid regularly all the year round, according to Reles, and all the boys make a "good living."

That is the optimistic view natural to a foreman; he resents any implication that his men are underpaid. "Punks" like Pretty Levine and Duke Maffetore, now caught in the O'Dwyer net, tell another story. They say that "troopers" make little money. They are often broke; they are compelled to borrow at fantastic interest rates from the syndicate; and they commit murders for as little as $5, or even for coffee and cake. They have no choice, because once they are in the gang they can't quit. And Reles admits that nine times out of ten when a mobster wants to quit he is killed. The widow is not told what happened to her husband, though she may learn about it from the newspapers. However, she receives his salary as long as his gang is making money. This is Murder, Inc.'s own form of life insurance.

In his confession Reles has insisted that the Combination is a "business" outfit, an economic syndicate whose main object is not murder but money. The murder is incidental to the struggle for money, just as in the moral world wars may be incidental to the struggle for markets. Since Murder, Inc., obtains its money by illegal means, it must purge rivals, code violators, and renegades by illegal means. Under the laws of the community this is murder; from the viewpoint of the crime trust it is just execution.

The economic setup of Murder, Inc., apes big business; its "troops" ape the military machine; its internal justice fantastically mimics our official courts. Charged

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with violating mob law, a gangster may under certain circumstances demand and obtain a trial by his peers. Here the leaders are judges, and various gangsters appear as prosecutors, witnesses, and "lawyers" for the defense. On several occasions, Reles will tell you proudly, he appeared as counsel for fellow-gangsters on trial before a Murder, Inc., court. He has a flair for legal jargon; he has had plenty of opportunity to hear it in the forty-three times that he has been brought into the official courts. He has defended fellow-gangsters by arguing, "This ain't admissible evidence," or "There ain't no corroboration for this."

Verdicts of Murder, Inc., courts and executions ordered by its leaders are accepted without question by the membership. Loyalty to the group transcends all friendships, all blood ties. The big shots may inform a gangster: "Your brother was a rat; we had to shoot him." The gangster, knowing what is best for him, accepts his brother's execution in silence. Fifteen years ago Louis Capone's own gang killed his brother. Louis, no relation to Al Capone but a powerful figure in the Brooklyn underworld, has known this all along and has done nothing about it. It all happened within accepted mob regulations.

The crime trust, Reles insists, never commits murders out of passion, excitement, jealousy, personal revenge, or any of the usual motives which prompt private, unorganized murder. It kills impersonally, and solely for business considerations. Even business rivalry, he adds, is not the usual motive, unless "somebody gets too balky or somebody steps right on top of you." No gangster may kill on his own initiative; every murder must be ordered by the leaders at the top, and it must serve the welfare of the organization.

A murder by the crime trust can be arranged only by one of the big shots. An ordinary citizen cannot hire Murder, Inc., to do away with someone he does not like. You may, of course, approach a minor triggerman with a proposition to bump off someone for $5,000. But if he did that, Murder, Inc., would kill him. Such a triggerman, Reles says, is not safe to have around. Any member of the mob who would dare to kill on his own initiative or for his own profit would be executed. "Suppose," Reles says, "I come to a triggerman on my own hook and give him $5,000 to rub out someone I don't like. What's to stop him from taking $10,000 from someone else to rub me out?" The crime trust insists that murder must be a business matter, organized by the chiefs in conference and carried out in a disciplined way. "It's real business all the way through," Reles explains. "It just happens to be that kind of business, but nobody is allowed to kill from personal grievance. There's got to be a good business reason, and the top men of the Combination must give their okay."

In support of this contention, Reles gives examples of "good business reasons." George Rudnick, whom Happy Maione and Frank Abbandando are accused of having removed from this earth, had turned police informer—a simple instance of cause and effect. Willie Weber, the policy racketeer, rated death because he bucked the Combination's attempt to organize the policy racket along trust lines. All other policy men entered the Combination. They had one boss, Lucky Luciano; they all turned in their profits to him, and he paid them a salary. Weber held out for the old laissez faire system; he kept his own policy bank and insisted on continuing in business for himself. The Combination decided to execute him. Weber turned out to be tough; he escaped death, though they managed to blow his shoulder off with shotguns. Pittsburgh Phil Strauss was bitter about the failure to rub out Weber. It was a great financial loss to the Brooklyn mob. Under the verbal contract with Luciano the killing of Weber would have given them 50 per cent of his policy racket—perhaps a million dollars clear.

Another clear case cited by Reles was that of Walter Sage. The boys liked Sage. "He was like one of us," Reles explained, "hanging around the corners of East New York making a living this way and that." Pittsburgh Phil staked him to the peanut-machine racket on a percentage basis. But Sage disappointed everybody. He doublecrossed his patron and ran away with Strauss's share of the profits. Accordingly his friend Big Gangi was detailed to visit him in Sullivan County. Later handsome, green-eyed Pretty Levine, an unfeeling triggerman, was sent up to meet the boys. They took the unsuspecting Sage for a pleasure trip through the woods in a 1937 Oldsmobile sedan. Without warning Big Gangi and Pretty Levine stabbed Sage with an icepick fifty-four times, tied a slot machine around the corpse, and threw it into Swan Lake. "There's the motive," Reles added, "when you have no respect."

Under syndicate rules it is "illegal" to kill a man outside your own territory. If New York wants a man rubbed out and he escapes to St. Louis, the job must be done through the St. Louis branch. The St. Louis leaders must give their okay and choose the killers. For strategic reasons they may call in triggermen from out of town, "so the man who will be killed won't know them," Reles explains, "and they can put him on the spot. You go to St. Louis and you don't know a thing about the man you are going to kill or why he is being killed. When you get there, you are told what to do."

Often the killer has to read the newspaper to find out whom he has executed. Then he goes into hiding, usually in Detroit. There is a special fund to take care of him, to cover his living expenses in hiding, to defend him if he is caught. Every branch of Murder, Inc., contributes to it.

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Reles insists that any murder committed in the United States which has not been solved within a reasonable length of time is a murder committed by the Combination. It has got to be, he says; a private killing is broken sooner or later by the police, usually within six months or a year. If a killing remains unsolved for five or ten years, you may be sure it was the work of Murder, Inc.

[*This is the first of a series of articles by Mr. Freeman on Murder, Inc. Further revelations will appear in an early issue.*]

Men Who Would Be President

VII. TAFT FOR SAFETY

BY ROBERT S. ALLEN

TWO facts about the Presidential candidacy of Robert Alphonso Taft are significant. One is that the inner leaders, who own and run the G. O. P., are privately predicting that either the Ohioan or a dark horse will win the nomination. The other is that although few of them know him well, and none are excited about him, all are sure he is absolutely safe. The last words tell the whole story of the rise and potency of the Taft boom.

Robert Alphonso Taft is no glamour boy. He is scraggly bald, bespectacled, and a careless dresser, with a voice like a crow's caw and a personality that chills on sight. But he has the one essential ingredient of a winning Republican aspirant—irreproachable safeness. He was safe locally in Cincinnati, he was safe in state matters as a member of the Ohio Legislature, and he has been 100 per cent safe as a United States Senator. To the Joe Pews, the Charley Hilleses, the Ernie Weirs, the du Ponts, the Hoovers, and the other moguls of the Republican Party, that counts above all else. Personally Taft may not stir them, but his unblemished tory record moves them to the core. Of all the candidates seriously in the running, he has the record most after their own hearts. They know where Taft stands, and it is just where they want him to stand, unreservedly and imperturbably on their side.

That is why with them it is either Taft or a dark horse, like Governor Bricker—Joe Pew's secret first love—or Justice Owen J. Roberts or the smart little House floor leader, Joe Martin. On the basis of the "form chart" Taft should make it. He will go to the barrier at Philadelphia on the inside rail, with more pledged and hidden delegate strength than Dewey and with the backing of some of the most powerful chiefs in the G. O. P. But with all these advantages he still may not get the nomination. It has happened in the past that others just as favorably placed have fallen by the wayside on the home stretch. On the final lap there are several tough hurdles that may trip Taft—one in the region below the Mason and Dixon Line.

Taft managers claim most of the Southern delegates, and it is significant that the claim is not seriously disputed by the rival camps. Now as any novice in politics knows, Southern delegates have frequently been put in the category of a cash-and-carry commodity. Taftites hotly deny that their prized Southern booty was obtained by other than legitimate means, but tucked away in the effusive *Life* profile several months ago—which Dave Ingalls, Taft's manager and cousin, liked so well that he sent out scores of telegrams calling attention to it—was this very interesting observation: "So far the funds have been enough to meet the peculiar requirements of Republican campaigning in several Southern states." Peculiar is not what the politicians call it.

The hectic 1920 convention in Chicago offered proof that Southern delegates can be as much a liability as an asset. Under certain conditions, such as the heat of a Senate campaign-fund investigation, they have a marked explosive propensity. And the Democratic majority on the investigating committee now functioning is decidedly rarin' to go. It can be taken for granted that the boys would love nothing better than to prepare some juicy headline material at the expense of a leading G. O. P. candidate. And certain not disinterested Republicans apparently feel the same way—to judge from pointed hints that have been quietly dropped in the ears of committee members. Taft campaign managers vigorously assert that they are not at all concerned and would welcome an inquiry.

In mental equipment Taft is by far the ablest of the active Republican candidates. He also is the most forthright and the only one who has had the courage and honesty to take a stand on specific issues. He is an unrelieved tory; a corporation and utility lawyer who if elected will administer the affairs of the nation rigorously from that viewpoint. And he makes no bones about it. In a speech in Philadelphia recently he laid his cards bluntly on the table. "There is only one solution for the nation's ills," he said, "and that is to repeal a large part

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of the laws authorizing the regulation of agriculture, commerce, and industry, and in those laws which must remain, prescribe definite standards to which the regulators must conform." He also denounced the New Deal for imposing taxes "not to raise money but to attempt a redistribution of wealth," and castigated the AAA, the Wage-Hour administration, the National Labor Relations Board, the Housing Authority, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and reciprocal trade treaties. Ultra-reactionary certainly. You may not like it, but at least you know where he stands—which is a lot more than can be said about his fellow Republican candidates, whose outpourings have been chiefly sonorous generalities mixed with glittering hokum. Whatever his views, Taft has courage and ability. In these respects he is no Harding, or Coolidge, or Hoover. By all odds he is the most competent old-line Republican who has sought the Presidency in many years.

Robert A. Taft

Intellectually and temperamentally Taft is his mother's son. Because in her day President's wives were seen and not heard, Mrs. William Howard Taft—née Helen Herron, daughter of a prominent Cincinnati corporation attorney—never emerged publicly in her true character. But those who know her are aware that she was a very clever, ambitious woman and the driving force behind her huge, amiable, lazy husband. Bob Taft has his mother's resolution and narrow but keen intellect. Charlie, the younger son, who is liberally inclined, is more like his genial father.

Like his mother, Robert Taft's wife is a woman of force and ambition who has been a definite asset in his public career. The daughter of President Taft's Solicitor General, Martha Bowers Taft is an effective political campaigner and glad-hander. To her husband's annoyance she is frequently compared to Eleanor Roosevelt. Intrinsically they have little in common. Eleanor Roosevelt is a person of wide sympathies, deep understanding, and great moral and intellectual courage. Martha Taft is a charming woman with a flair for politics.

Up to his entrance into politics Bob Taft's career followed the usual pattern for a serious-minded scion of a wealthy family. He prepared for college at the Taft School at Watertown, Connecticut, founded by his scholarly uncle; from there he went to Yale, his father's alma mater; he took his law degree at Harvard. Light is thrown on his capacity by the fact that he led his classes in college, was editor-in-chief of the *Harvard Law Review*, and passed the Ohio bar examination with top honors. Writing about him recently in a reminiscent vein, Howard Vincent O'Brien, columnist of the Chicago *Daily News*, painted this picture of Taft in college days:

> Myself a college classmate of Robert Taft, I am struck by the difference between his position as an undergraduate and that of F. D. R. Few, if any, of Roosevelt's classmates at Harvard ever dreamed of his attaining a great place in the world. But by Taft's classmates at Yale it was taken for granted that he would always be somebody.
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> . . . I cannot recall that he ever did anything outstanding, such as being prom chairman, or captain of the football team, or editing the *Lit*. . . . His one preeminence was in studies. He was always at the head of the class. Strangely enough, however, his scholarship never excited the disrespect that college students usually give it. One reason, I suppose, was that he was never a "greasy grind," never honeyed up to teachers, never paraded his erudition, and was never above helping a weaker vessel.
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> He is definitely "conservative." I think he is even a little narrow. . . . I don't think he understands the common man as well as F. D. R. does, but I think he can learn.

Refusing several attractive offers from New York law firms, Taft chose to serve his apprenticeship with Maxwell and Ramsey, leading corporation lawyers in his home town. Later, with his brother Charlie and several friends, he set up his own firm, which with the aid of the family's name and extensive business interests rapidly grew to be one of the largest and most successful in Cincinnati.

Defective eyesight kept Taft out of military service during the World War. But he served as assistant general counsel of the Hoover Food Administration and in that post began a friendship with the Great Engineer that still flourishes. For tactical reasons Hoover is keeping silent regarding Taft's candidacy, but the Ohioan is his first choice—after himself. Hoover still harbors a burning desire for another try, and the latest inside word is that if Taft is stopped, Hoover and Bricker, whose support of Taft is only skin deep, have a secret understanding to attempt a blitz-stampede for a Hoover-Bricker ticket.

Taft's first sortie into politics was in 1920, when he was elected to the Assembly of the Ohio Legislature. He served in the chamber until 1926, rising to be Republican floor leader in 1925 and speaker during his final year. He also served one term in the state Senate, from 1930 to 1932. He was defeated for reelection although another Republican senatorial candidate from the same district won handily—a fact that is not recalled in his official

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campaign literature or in the laudatory sketches that have appeared in the last few months in the big national weeklies. This omission points to one of the tenderest spots of Taft's candidacy—the often-heard charge that he is a poor vote-getter. Taft managers and press agents have gone to great pains to refute this. Practically every statement, handout, and article emanating from their typewriters or inspired by them contains some reference designed to offset this suspicion. Alice Longworth's extraordinary effusion in the *Saturday Evening Post* several weeks ago was "angled" entirely to deal with this matter.

Mrs. Longworth and the other Taft tooters make much of his decisive defeat of Democratic Senator Robert Bulkley, bearing down heavily on the fact that while Ohio went Democratic by over 600,000 in 1936, Taft retired Bulkley by 170,000. That is true, but it is far from the whole story. Taft won the G. O. P. nomination by only 70,000 votes, after what his opponent loudly charged was a spending orgy; the official records show that more than $250,000 was spent for Taft in the primary. Also, up to the last few weeks of the campaign most of the press reports rated his rival as the probable winner of the nomination. In the election contest Taft couldn't have asked for a weaker opponent. Besides being a bungling campaigner, Bulkley had a record that was impossible to defend. He was neither a New Dealer nor a conservative. He had taken pokes at labor, had talked economy and budget balancing, had been all over the map during the great court-reform battle, and had voted to lift the undivided-profits tax. Yet despite his many handicaps he defeated Taft overwhelmingly in the big industrial center of the state; Taft owed his election to the small-town and rural vote, which in Ohio is traditionally Republican in normal election years.

When referring to his career in the Ohio Legislature, Taft press agents never fail to emphasize his talents as a taxation authority. According to his official campaign biography, he "revised the entire tax system of Ohio." It is significant, however, that no details of this revision are ever given. The record shows that it was embodied in a so-called Classified Tax Act, under which personal property, such as stocks and bonds, is assessed at lower rates than real estate. He also sponsored legislation requiring towns and cities to set up budget systems which would compel them to limit their expenditures. Carefully omitted from the blurbs are these additional facts: During his first term he backed the Republican governor in proroguing the Legislature—the first time in the history of the state that the legislative branch was forcibly adjourned. He voted to appropriate $62,521 for coal companies as payment for fuel which an investigation of the previous Republican regime had disclosed had been bought at excessive prices. When Governor Donahey, a Democrat, vetoed the appropriation, Taft voted to override the veto. He strenuously fought a bill placing gas production and distribution under the state utilities commission as a move toward reducing rates. He vigorously supported a bill changing the method of assessing franchise taxes on local corporations. In vetoing this measure Donahey denounced it as designed to save corporations at least $1,500,000 a year. Taft led the fight to override the veto.

On the other side of the ledger stands Taft's excellent record on civil-liberty issues. He voted for a bill requiring the Klan and other secret organizations to file their officer and membership lists with the state, against a Klan-sponsored bill requiring reading of the Bible in public schools, and for an investigation of telephone rates. In this last he may have had a personal interest since the Taft family owns the Cincinnati Telephone Company, the largest independent in the country, and the probe was understood to be aimed at the Bell system. On the few labor questions that came up during his terms Taft also had a good record. He voted for a bill to establish minimum wages for women and minors in industry, for a constitutional amendment liberalizing the workmen's compensation system, and for outlawing "yellow-dog" contracts. This measure was fiercely opposed by industrial interests, but Taft went squarely down the line in support of it.

His part in the great reform battle that freed Cincinnati from one of the most corrupt political machines in the country and his 100 per cent reactionary record in the United States Senate are the two most important things left unmentioned in the flood of Taft propaganda. For decades Cincinnati had been ruled by a succession of notorious Republican bosses. Finally conditions became so bad that leading business men joined with labor, liberals, and other civic-minded groups in a rousing revolt that smashed the machine and set up a city-manager form of government. One of the leaders of the movement was Charles Taft, who still holds office as a reform councilman. Fighting him tooth and nail in behalf of the foul Republican organization was Robert Alphonso Taft. Bob Taft's apologists, when the issue is raised, insist that he was not against the clean-up, but that he wanted to accomplish the same thing by reform within the G. O. P. The Scripps-Howard Cincinnati *Post,* however, militant champion of the reform movement, was recently moved to this vehement protest at the blurbs in the slick-paper magazines:

> A decent respect for truth forces the *Post* to take issue with *Life Magazine's* amazing interpretation of Robert Taft's position during the fight for honest government in Cincinnati a decade and a half ago. . . . One paragraph is devoted to this phase of Robert Taft's career, as follows: "Meanwhile he had begun to be active in the Cincinnati Republican organization. At the start the organization was extremely malodorous, but fortunately

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for his future ambitions he always remained a regular Republican. His brother Charlie was a leader of the Republican City Charterites, who bolted the party, joined with the Democrats to start a city-charter movement, and set up a city-manager government in Cincinnati. Bob Taft, more conservative, helped to write the city charter but would not join Charlie Taft's bolt. Instead, he stayed on in the organization, helped to clean it up. . . . "

The purpose of this paragraph is to make it appear that Robert Taft was at heart a reformer but that he chose the method of working from within the Republican machine. The truth is that Robert Taft was a bitter enemy of the municipal-reform movement in Cincinnati and that he campaigned actively against the adoption of the charter amendments in 1924 which gave the city the P. R.-elected small council and city-manager administration.

It was nearly two years after these basic amendments . . . were adopted that Mr. Taft was named (July, 1926) a member of a board to make further revisions and incorporate them in a new charter. . . . As to "reforming" the Republican Party from within, the record showed last fall that twenty-one of the twenty-six G. O. P. ward chairmen in the city were politicians taught by Rud Hynicka, the heir of the notorious George B. Cox. The "reformation" apparently has not been completed at this writing. The *Post* said during Mr. Taft's campaign for the United States Senate: "Robert Taft turned his face to the dead past; his first love and his first loyalty were given to party and he did not swerve from that narrow allegiance to take up the people's cause even while an angered citizenry smashed the party machine to give Cincinnati a decent government and a place of honor instead of shame among American cities."

Neither Taft, his managers, nor his apologists have yet answered this ringing challenge. The reason is obvious. They can't.

Nor can they talk away his equally reactionary record in the United States Senate. The only thing that can be said for it is that it has been consistent—Taft has voted the way he has talked. He has talked economy and budget balancing and has consistently voted against relief, farm, housing, and other Administration measures. He has denounced the TVA, Bonneville, and the other great power projects and voted to shut off their funds. He has assailed the SEC, the NLRB, and the Wage-Hour Division and has voted to slash their appropriations. His only important deviation from an anti-New Deal line has been in foreign affairs. In the neutrality fight last fall he supported the President's bill to repeal the arms embargo. On the other hand he battled hard for traditional Republican tariff protection by opposing renewal of the reciprocal-trade law.

This is the record of the man who a month from now may be the chosen standard bearer of his party at a time when the country is facing one of the most crucial periods in its history.

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Blitzkrieg in Wall Street

A FEW weeks ago Robert Laffan, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, gave the following recipe for confidence:

> What the stock market probably needs to sustain it or improve it, taking a short or day-to-day view, is freedom from fear of any sudden change in the complexion of things abroad, *a war active enough to stimulate the exports upon which present hopes are built, yet not decisive enough to indicate an early end to the war. And, of course, a war in which the position of the Allies is never quite jeopardized.* On top of that, what the market needs, according to the Street's own testimony, is a favorable outcome for domestic politics. (My italics.)

This may sound cynical, but recent events have shown it to be extremely shrewd. For while the war in Europe has taken a turn active enough to excite any munitioneer, the terrific power of the Nazi drive has unquestionably placed the Allies in a position of jeopardy. This, in turn, has jarred American complacency about the "inevitability" of a final Allied victory and led to really serious consideration of the possible effects on the interests of this country of a Hitlerian triumph in Europe. The obvious repercussions of this change in attitude on domestic politics are hardly conducive to "a favorable outcome" in the eyes of Wall Street.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the surge of Hitler's legions across the Low Countries brought on a wave of liquidation in the stock market. "War babies" and "peace babies," capital-goods and consumer-goods stocks, all shared in the débâcle. Commodity markets were also hit by a tornado of selling, with wheat dropping the full ten-cent limit permitted by trading regulations on two days in succession.

When the market atmosphere is supercharged with emotion, cold fact is always at a heavy discount. Hence, in the past week rather important indications of an improvement in the general business situation have been almost ignored. There has been, however, a sharp rise in the rate of steel operations to 70 per cent of capacity, and a sudden jump in the price of steel scrap is regarded as indicative of even further expansion. Other leading heavy industries, such as chemicals, which showed few signs of recession during the winter, are maintaining or improving their position. Residential construction is continuing to forge ahead of last year, and car loadings are gaining.

To what extent is the domestic picture likely to be distorted by Hitler's latest aggressions? On the debit side must be placed the loss of one and probably two important markets. Holland and Belgium are small, highly industrialized countries which consume considerable quantities of American goods, particularly farm products. In 1939 purchases from the United States of these two countries (including Luxemburg) totaled $161,000,000. By far the most important items were wheat, corn, cotton, and soy beans, and the destruction of these markets undoubtedly influenced last week's fall in commodities. Appreciable amounts of oil, automobiles, and machinery are also sold to the Low Countries in normal

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times. Against these losses, perhaps, can be set some probable gains in American exports to countries hitherto supplied by Belgium and Holland. Latin American importers who have been customers for Belgian steel and glass, for Dutch radios and farm machinery, may now place orders here. But, it must be remembered, Latin America has also lost a good market and its buying power will be so much less.

The destruction of the Low Countries as a source of supplies and the new intensity of military operations will increase the dependence of Britain and France on American resources. Both countries consumed large quantities of Belgian and Luxemburg steel, for instance, with the result that, in the past few days, they have been compelled to place large orders with American producers. In addition, the enormous wastage involved in battle operations on the scale now taking place is certain to lead the Allies to speed up their purchases of planes and trucks, and will probably lead to a large demand for shells and explosives, for which only comparatively small orders have been given so far. The oil companies, also, may begin to reap the war profits they have missed hitherto owing to the fact that military consumption has not offset the fall in rationed civilian consumption. Now the fierce pitch of aerial warfare, coupled with the closing of the Mediterranean, through which Britain and France imported oil from the Near East, suggests a rising demand for American oil.

On top of this prospective expansion in war-goods production there comes the stepping up of our own defense preparations, promising a large quantity of new business for shipbuilders, plane manufacturers, machine-tool makers, steel mills, and a large number of other industries. Hence a cold-blooded review of the situation does not indicate many sound reasons for liquidating stocks, always assuming that the war is not going to end rapidly in the defeat of the Allies. But there's the rub. The isolationism so marked in Wall Street since the beginning of the war, like so much of the isolationism in other quarters, has all along depended on an unspoken major premise—the certainty of final Allied victory. That premise has been as badly battered as the Belgian defenses in the past week, and in its place has arisen an alarming query: What will be the effect of a German victory, of a Nazification of Europe and its colonies, on American life, politics, and business?

To attempt even a tentative answer to this question would require a long article and would take this department far beyond its proper scope. But it is clear that our economy would to a large extent have to be made over. We should, almost certainly, proceed to rearm on a scale that would make even our present defense expenditure look like small change. The traditional basis of our foreign trade would vanish, and we should have to adapt it to comply with the requirements of totalitarian states in a position, perhaps, to control our sources of raw materials. Probably we should be driven to construct at a revolutionary tempo an autarchic system of our own, with devastating effects on our standard of living and the consequent development of far more dangerous social tensions than exist at present. If thoughts like these are beginning dimly to appear in the minds of those whose decisions animate the stock tickers, we need look no farther for the lack of confidence shaking Wall Street.

In the Wind

TOM DEWEY is in danger of receiving the Bund's indorsement of his Presidential candidacy. Bund leaders are solemnly discussing the move because of Dewey's recent isolationist stand. The only obstacle, they say, is the Kuhn conviction; and a promise of a pardon would fix that.

MOST NEWSPAPERS carried a detailed account of the Daughters of the Depression parley in Washington, held to dramatize the unemployment crisis. The publicity given to the affair was stimulated by Mrs. Roosevelt's presence. From Washington sources we learn that several prominent New Dealers, not including F. D. R., urged her—in vain—to shun the conference because it was accused of being "red."

BEFORE THE recent dinner of foreign correspondents in New York speakers were asked to submit thumbnail sketches of themselves. W. H. Auden replied: "In the course of the last fortnight I have heard myself described as a Communist, a Trotskyite, a Roman Catholic, and as one sent over by the British government to prevent there being another Rupert Brooke. As far as I know, none of these statements are correct."

SEVERAL IMPORTANT trade-union leaders who have frequently been accused of "Stalinism" may be denounced by the C. P. soon. The break will occur if and when John L. Lewis abandons third-party talk and returns to the New Deal fold, a move expected by most labor observers. It is felt that in the present setting third-party plans are out. Many leaders sympathetic to the Communists accept that verdict and will follow Lewis. The C. P. won't.

DURING A recent editorial conference in the *PM* offices a loud crash was heard, as if someone had fallen through the roof. George Lyon, *PM's* managing editor, a former Scripps-Howard executive, looked up and remarked, "It's Roy Howard."

THE NEW YORK *Daily Worker* last week lauded John Strachey as one of a "staunch group of sincere fighters against war." The editors seem to have been unaware of a letter Strachey wrote three weeks ago to the *New Statesman and Nation,* saying: "Every line written in the *Daily Worker* [British] drives me to the conclusion that those controlling the *Daily Worker* are prepared, for the sake of what they consider to be the interests of the Soviet Union, to give way to Hitler to any extent. . . . So long as that remains the case I . . . can have nothing to do with them . . . however much I agree with them as to the general character of the war."

IN ITALY, so anti-Fascists say, where there are ten Italians there are ten Fascists; where there is one Italian, there isn't any Fascist.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

WALTER LIPPMANN has got the jitters again. More than three years ago, when it looked as if war was near in Europe, he declared that, if it came, the only way we could safeguard our neutrality would be to mobilize three million men at once and set them down on our shores. With incredible naivete and the lack of realism that is so often astonishing in this man who has been for so many years writing for the press, he actually set forth (see my Issues and Men of January 16, 1936) that this would be the surest way to prevent the rise of a great war party in the United States, demanding war as did Theodore Roosevelt and Leonard Wood in 1915-17, and the surest way to keep us out of war. It never occurred to him that an army of three million men, after it had made all the sacrifice of drilling for months and months, would be just crazy to get going and do something.

Now Walter Lippmann declares that our duty to America requires us to prepare to make over our state according to the Hitler model, especially if the Allies are defeated. Of course he does not use those words, and if he reads these of mine he will say that he never said anything of the kind. Yet what he calls for is none the less exactly that. This is what he actually wrote:

> Isolated in a world that envies us and despises us, we too shall have to become a nation in arms. We too shall have to have conscription; we too shall have to regiment capital and labor in order that we may be able to build the ships and the airplanes, and the guns and cannon without which we shall be harassed and intimidated, threatened and blackmailed by the coalition on both sides of us.

He elaborated further in these words:

> The next thing to do is to adopt a program of national defense of vastly greater scope than that which is now in operation. The experience of Great Britain should be a lesson to us that it is not enough to appropriate money to buy what the existing facilities can supply: it is necessary to create new shipyards, new airplane factories, new plants for the production of guns and other implements of war. There is needed a larger investment of new capital: it is not safe to let the aircraft industry, for example, wait for its expansion upon subsidies from the Allies.

Precisely. I have done him no injustice. Carry out this program, plus universal military conscription and the complete reorganization of American industrial life to make it part of the American military machine, as German industry has been made part of the German military machine, and you have the totally militarized state which can only lead to Fascism or National Socialism. What he wants America to do in order to protect our democracy is to undertake the very way of life which is most inimical to the continuance of republican institutions. If we take his advice we shall destroy democracy in order to defend it, destroy it by injecting into its veins the very poison which has proved fatal to it in so many countries abroad.

I find myself wondering whether Walter Lippmann would not admit that I am right, that the remedy may be as bad as the evil of conquest by the dictators, or lead in the last analysis to the same end, and say that he prefers to take the risk. I find many people caught in this dilemma. The minute the total war began they too cried out that we must arm at once, at all costs. They too forgot all their horror over Franklin Roosevelt's unbalanced budget, their bitter indignation that he was anxious to lift the debt limit still higher. And when I asked them what they were planning to do to safeguard democracy, they admitted the weight of argument on my side but added helplessly: "But what else can we do?"

Of course if Walter Lippmann had anything really to contribute to the defense problem of the United States except mere emotion and an incredible ignorance of military affairs, he would have recommended that we keep cool and quiet and ascertain why it is that we have no defense policy and that therefore our expenditures bear no relationship to any military program, and why we do not tell our army and navy what to defend and how to do it. He could then have pointed out (1) that the primary defense question for the United States, one that is still unsettled, is whether we are only to defend our shores or are to make ready to fight abroad; (2) that all our military expenditures are unintelligent, wasteful, uncoordinated, and often misdirected; (3) that there are the gravest faults in the organization of the War and Navy departments, and that they fail to cooperate adequately and will not function in war time. Why, he might have asked, is it possible for Major General Arnold to have told Senator Lodge that only one hundred of our thousands of airplanes are today fit to go into action in Europe? Just raising these questions and seeking the answers would have contributed more to a sane defense policy than all the wild words he has penned so far. But now that the President has come to this position, he will be the more certain he is right.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Crime

BY ROBERT PENN WARREN

Envy the mad killer, who lies in the ditch and grieves,
Hearing the horns on the highway, and the tires scream;
He tries to remember, and tries, but he cannot seem
To remember what it was he buried under the leaves.

By the steamed lagoon, near the carnivorous orchid,
Pirates hide treasure, and mark the place with a skull,
Then lose the map, and roar in pubs with a skinful,
In Devon or Barbados; but remember what they hid.

And what is hid? But he is too tired to ask it.
An old woman, mumbling her gums like incertitude?
The proud stranger who asked the match by the park wood?
Or the child who crossed the park every day with the lunch-basket?

He cannot say, nor formulate the delicious
And smooth convolution of terror, like whipped cream,
Nor the mouth, rounded and white for the lyric scream
Which he never heard, though he still tries, nodding and serious.

His treasure: for years down streets of contempt and trouble,
Hugged under his coat, among sharp elbows and rows
Of eyes hieratic like foetuses in jars.
Or he nursed it unwitting, like a child asleep with a bauble.

Happiness: what the heart wants. That is its fond
Definition, and wants only the peace in God's eye.
Our flame bends in that draft; and that is why
He clutched at the object bright on the bottom of the murky pond.

Peace, all he asked: past despair and past the uncouth
Violation, he grasped at the fleeting hem, though in error;
Nor gestured before the mind's sycophant mirror,
Nor made the refusal and spat from the secret side of his mouth.

Though a tree for you is a tree, and in the long
Dark no sibilant tumor inside your enormous
Head, though no walls confer in the still house,
Nor the eyes of pictures protrude, like a snail's, each on its prong,

Yet envy him, for what he buried is buried
By the culvert there, till the boy with air-gun
In spring, with the violet, comes; nor is ever known
To go on any vacations with him, lend money, break bread.

And envy him, for though the seasons stutter
Past pulse in the yellow throat of the field-lark,
Still memory drips, like a pipe in the cellar-dark,
And in its hole, as when the earth wakes to the vernal shudder,
The cold heart heaves like a toad, and lifts its brow
With that bright jewel you have no use for now;
While still confused, despised with the attic junk, the letter
Names your name, and mourns under the dry rafter.

My Son

BY DAVID CORNEL DEJONG

Let him go and dishonor his sister,
Stride on and molest the reasonless love
Of his brother, and reach impossible mills
To grind his strength into an essence
Of faith and indefatigable ills.

Not now assail the hot and fevered
Tents of his thinking. He will yet defeat
His father, and burn his mother's feet,
Obeying a call that shot from the dark,
Leaving him defiant in the street.

Sometime he may chance upon love or power
And stand tilted before their pluming seas,
Letting his hands fall on slack thighs,
Caring no more for all that destroys
The endless pennants he flings to the skies.

Must he start at that hour to thread humbly
The sinews and arteries of every man
He slew together again? While his strength ruffles thin,
Must he again and again put out his hand to feel
Earth already drawn like a sheet to his chin?

Better to carry him in on a door ripped sadly
From its hinges, put him among zinnias and find
A chair to echo his creaking. Till then, old men,
Muffle your cacklings. I shall let him go where only
His muscles' destruction can temper him again.

[*These poems were selected for* The Nation *by John Berryman.*]

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American Foreign Policy

A FOREIGN POLICY FOR AMERICA. By Charles A. Beard. Alfred A. Knopf. $1.50.

ISOLATED AMERICA. By Raymond Leslie Buell. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

THE simultaneous publication of two books on foreign policy by such authors as Charles A. Beard and Raymond Leslie Buell whets the appetite for a great debate on foreign policy. One might suspect, in fact, that some national committee had been at work to pick the two best men to present contrasting opinions on the most serious issue now before the American people. But the debate doesn't come off. Mr. Buell is there with an exhaustive analysis of what isolation would mean in economic, political, and military terms. But Mr. Beard does not join the issue. He is content to deal with the problem in terms of tradition. He seeks to prove, I think successfully, that isolationism, or in his terms "continentalism," is the settled policy of the American people, one from which they have been periodically beguiled but to which they return perennially as to a safe harbor. He assumes of course that it is a good policy for America, but he does not go out of his way to prove it. He does not consider whether it is a good policy for the world but seems to have a slightly uneasy conscience about this omission, for he closes his book with a curious final sentence-paragraph which stands completely alone without an argument to support it. The sentence is: "This policy [continentalism] followed by the United States would favor, not hinder, the coming of peace to other nations of the world."

The thesis of Professor Beard's book is that two villains, "imperialism" and "internationalism," have tried to tempt America from the path of true innocence. Admiral Mahan and Theodore Roosevelt were the symbols of the imperialistic forces, and Woodrow Wilson was the final and most perfect expression of the impulse toward internationalism. "The original policy of continentalism was framed by the founders of the American Republic," who were "experienced, active, and effective statesmen." This basic policy was twice violated, but with the passage of the Neutrality Act in 1935 America returned to its original tradition. Even the amended act of 1939 "was thoroughly continentalist in letter and spirit, although it gave peace advocates all the pleasure they could derive from the sale of instruments of war to belligerents who could buy."

Mr. Beard holds the "governing élite" responsible for turning the "American nation away from its continental center of gravity"—one is left in some confusion about the identity of this "governing élite." He declares that the "idea of imperial expansion was not the business man's dream"; rather business men "were 'dragooned' into it by politicians." The forces behind internationalism are identified as "an intelligentsia large, educated, vocal, and ingenious and politicians unable or afraid to grapple with the domestic crisis." According to his thesis such "continentalists" as Thomas Dewey and Senator Vandenberg, and for that matter the whole Republican Party, represent the resurgence of popular forces who have recaptured the citadels of national safety from the élite. Something is wrong in this picture.

Mr. Beard has no great difficulty in proving the futility of a great deal of our internationalism. The heroes of the Kellogg Peace Pact are perfect subjects for his satirical observations. Nor it is difficult to point to the present international situation as proof of the failure of this internationalism. "Nearly every evil that was inconceivable in internationalist ideology in 1919 came to pass within the span of twenty years." Mr. Beard is willing to leave the question of the cause of this failure undecided. Perhaps internationalism was based upon "misconceptions respecting the nature and propensities of men and of nations." Perhaps the internationalists had merely "not adopted the correct approach to the goal they had set before themselves." The first explanation suggests that all attempts at international order are futile. The second explanation might prompt the elaboration of a more effective approach to the problem. But evidently Mr. Beard does not consider a choice between these two explanations necessary, since in any event tradition has determined the orthodoxy of our continentalist foreign policy.

It is to Mr. Beard's credit that he does not obscure the moral indifferentism which his policy involves. He declares that it is the duty of "public officials, especially the President and the Secretary of State, speaking in the name of the whole nation, to abstain from denouncing or abusing foreign states, good or bad, with whom diplomatic relations are maintained." He is quite right that a consistent policy of isolationism would involve just such an attitude, and it would be well in this hour, in which we face one of the greatest tragedies of European history, if Mr. Beard's less astute fellow-isolationists were able to understand and admit the moral implications of their position.

Mr. Buell does not seek to deny the isolationism of the Founding Fathers, though he casts some doubt upon its consistency. But he rightly doubts its relevance for our own day. His book is a closely reasoned and fully documented account of the power of America in an interdependent world and of the problems America would face in an anarchic world. He does not deny the failure of our excursions into "internationalism" since the World War. He attributes this failure to our divided mind. We had on the one hand a strong impulse to participate in a more decent world organization and, more recently, to stem the tide of authoritarian politics and the economics of *Autarkie.* But the isolationist impulses of our youth remained as vestigial remnants in our foreign policy and were reinforced by the comparative security of our continental position and of our economic power. "As a result of this unresolved conflict, the foreign policy of the United States has been full of inconsistencies and hesitations, which inevitably had an unsettling effect upon the world situation." In the world community America is a giant with infantile obsessions.

This divided mind revealed itself very clearly at the London Economic Conference, which we wrecked. "We adopted nationalistic methods of recovery as did every other power, trying to profit at the expense of others." While "Cordell Hull continues to preach the necessity of world order and understanding, his own country gives only lip-service to principles which it may yet openly repudiate." We lectured the world on the need of disarmament, but we refused to participate in any scheme of collective security

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which might make disarmament feasible. Several times we were driven very close to the minimal responsibility of promising to consult with other nations in the case of aggression, but in the end we always repudiated even such minimal obligations. We would not support "cooperative action in support of the anti-war pact of the Nine-Power Treaty," but the renunciation of the trade agreement with Japan was popular among us, and "it would not be difficult for some cynics to believe that the American people would support an old-fashioned war with Japan rather than participate in a system of international sanctions." Mr. Buell might have added that we are ready to spend untold billions defending ourselves against triumphant Nazism but are not willing to prevent its triumph.

Our divided mind revealed itself as recently as the invasion of Finland. The Senate came within three votes of abrogating our relations with Russia, but we would not give the Finns effective aid lest it might involve us in war. Our President satisfies the conscience of one-half of the nation by roundly denouncing the dictators while he is prevented by the apprehensions of the other half from doing anything in particular.

But this criticism is not the main purpose of Mr. Buell's book. Positively he seeks to prove that it is impossible for America to be prosperous in an impoverished world or healthy in an anarchic one. The barter system which fascist nations are introducing into world economy will seriously affect our economic life. We cannot even use our power to prevent such a system from spreading to South America and to establish a "continental" economy of self-sufficiency of our own, for we cannot absorb the surpluses of South America and cannot dispense with the rubber and other raw products of Africa and Asia. We imagine that we can prevent by a cash policy the kind of problem in which our credits to the Allies in the World War involved us. But as a consequence of our present policy we shall probably accumulate about "twenty-five billion dollars' worth of gold for which we have no domestic use. We lost ten billion dollars invested in the inter-Allied debt in the first World War; as a result of the second we may lose the larger part of twenty-five billion dollars' worth of gold. No doubt we shall again denounce the foreigner for such a result." Incidentally that gold would give us a tremendous opportunity to establish a stable international-currency scheme after the war; but we shall probably shy away from the risks and obligations of such an enterprise.

In terms of domestic politics Mr. Buell believes, I think rightly, that failure to take a positive attitude toward the preservation of democratic values "runs the risk of undermining the moral basis of our democracy." With no common faith to hold us together we shall have to seek unity and ward off the disintegrating force of warring creeds among us by coercive means. That will land us in fascism. In foreign politics the impulse to protect our continent in a warring and anarchic world will land us in a gigantic navalism. In economic life even our comparatively high self-sufficiency will not prevent the deterioration of our living standards if we seek, or are forced, to live on our own resources.

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his speeches. Spivak's inability to throw any startling light on Coughlin's inner circles is testimony to the secrecy in which "the mad monk of the shrine of the silver dollar"—as some of his less worshipful neighbors call him—shrouds his activities.

There is a more serious limit to the value of these revelations. Spivak writes like a detective with a social conscience; and detective stories rarely depict characters in their full dimensions. It is important to see Coughlin in the drab garments of a finagler who has a lawyer. But it is just as misleading to see him as no more than "Silver Charlie" as to see him as the "microphonic apostle"—Coughlin's description of himself. Coughlin's categorical imperative is not, I suspect, the quest for gold; no one has presented evidence to show that he has used publicly collected funds for private luxury. There are deeper power drives in the man which can explain the hypnotic effect he wields over the lonely and the underprivileged. The nation has been flooded with embryo führers trying to make a living out of fascism, but Coughlin has politically outlived most of them. I fear that most of his followers, if they read Spivak's exposé—which they won't—would write off the financial tricks as political genius. After all, the Shrine itself resembles a gilded automat, with slots on every side where the faithful can deposit nickels for one of the priest's many "funds"; but those who come to pray remain to pay. Coughlin's real crimes are far more serious than those Spivak has revealed, and far less susceptible of reprisal. His rhetoric is the triumph of half-truth and falsehood; and the invocation of postal laws against him is a puny sort of reply. Spivak has explained how *Social Justice* is financed. That is worth knowing. But it does not explain why *Social Justice* is read, and why Tommy Gallagher hawks it on the streets.

JAMES WECHSLER

Profile of a Period

AN AMERICAN IN PARIS: PROFILE OF AN INTERLUDE BETWEEN TWO WARS. By Janet Flanner. Simon and Schuster. $2.50.

THE title of this book is misleading and its subtitle still more so. It is a heterogeneous collection of magazine articles about personalities, beginning with Queen Mary and ending with Hitler. In between come William Bullitt, Picasso, Lady Mendl (Elsie de Wolfe), the late Coty, Stravinsky, Lily Pons, the late Isadora Duncan, the late Edith Wharton, Elsa Maxwell, four dressmakers, seven prominent criminals, two spies, and the late M. Deibler, executioner. Apart from the criminals and Deibler, only four of these—Coty, Lily Pons, Gabrielle Chanel, and Paul Poiret—are French, and all but three are or were survivors of the period before the last war and, if still alive, are advanced in age. Chanel would seem to be one of the youngest if, as the author says, she is in her late forties. In that case she must have been in her teens when she first opened a hat shop in Paris and, according to Miss Flanner, she had previously had one at Deauville. Miss Flanner is tactful. She rarely mentions a date in her pieces about living women.

Cohen-Portheim, who knew Paris as few of his countrymen since Heinrich Heine have known it, said in one of his

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books that the question in the first decade after the last war was whether Paris would remain the intellectual capital of the world or become an international Luna Park. Miss Flanner's strangely assorted gallery of portraits is not representative of Paris even when, thanks to the foreign invasion, it was in danger of becoming an international Luna Park. Even then the real Paris was still there, and it was not the frivolous and pretentious cosmopolitan roundabout that Miss Flanner seems to have known.

The author's statement in her introduction that Picasso, Stravinsky, Proust, and James Joyce were in the twenties "the biggest forces that France possessed" is absurd. Very few Frenchmen have ever read a word of James Joyce. The French translation of "Ulysses" had a comparatively small sale, and what sale it had was mainly due to the fact that the book had been forbidden in England on the ground that it was obscene. Even Proust, the only Frenchman among Miss Flanner's Big Four, has many more followers in England than in France, as is natural. With all his great qualities, he is all by himself in a backwater off the main stream of French literary tradition, and his un-French style derives perhaps to some extent from Walter Pater and certainly from George Meredith, some of whose books he translated into French and whom he considered the greatest English novelist of the nineteenth century.

Miss Flanner goes on to say that "around and between" her Big Four "arose" certain "locals." One of these locals, if you please, is André Gide, probably the greatest of living writers of French and certainly one of the most original, who, if I am not mistaken, was born in 1869 and who made his name in the nineties with the publication of "La Porte Etroite." Miss Flanner puts him in the same category and generation as Cocteau and the *surréalistes!* She has taken too seriously the intellectual snobs and poseurs who flourished in the twenties in the cafes of Montparnasse but are now rapidly becoming extinct. She does not mention any of the men who have come to the front in French literature since the last war, such as Jules Romains and Roger Martin du Gard.

Indeed, Miss Flanner seems to know less about French literature than about dressmakers and international hostesses. For example, she says that in 1921, when she went to live in Paris, "the first volumes of the dying Proust's 'Du Coté de chez Swann' were appearing." Proust wrote only one volume with that title, the first of a series called "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu," and it was published in 1913. Incidentally, Robert de Montesquiou—how Miss Flanner's omission of the particle would have annoyed him!—was the original not of Swann, as Miss Flanner supposes, but of Charlus.

Nevertheless, although the book does not justify its titles—still less the extravagant claims made in the publisher's blurb—it is a brilliant piece of journalism. Miss Flanner's portraits are very amusing and often delightfully malicious. That of Mr. Bullitt is, in my opinion, one of the best. The article on Hitler, originally published in 1936, shows that Miss Flanner at that time saw farther than many of her contemporaries. The part of the book that pleased me most is that dealing with celebrated crimes, which is first-rate descriptive reporting and extremely interesting. I am not so sure as Miss Flanner is that Stavisky was murdered by the police. She does not appear to have realized that the Stavisky scandal was exploited by certain politicians for party ends.

ROBERT DELL

Soviet Economy

TWO SYSTEMS: SOCIALIST ECONOMY AND CAPITALIST ECONOMY. By Eugene Varga. International Publishers. $2.50.

EUGENE VARGA is not only a "former professor of economics at the University of Budapest," as the book cover states, but the leading economic expert of the Comintern. His book was written in 1937, and although a postscript was added in July, 1939, nothing hints at a possible change in the Communist concepts put forward in periods preceding the Russo-German pact. Certain sections of the book might now be rather embarrassing for the author—for instance, his outline of "capitalist exploitation with precapitalist methods" in the present partner's country.

The major objective of the book is to show that everything is splendid in Soviet Russia, whereas everything is wretched everywhere else. A remarkable number of statistical data are employed in comparing the development of the material forces of production, labor and market conditions, the progress of agriculture, and the like in the Soviet Union with the trends in capitalist countries. Mr. Varga sees an unprecedented improvement of the living standards of both workers and peasants in the Soviet Union, while exploitation and impoverishment in the other countries steadily increase. Moreover, the Soviet Union, in his view, is the only existing true democracy and a sworn foe of national oppression.

Those sections of the book which show how the utilization of both labor and capital in the Western countries lags behind the available resources are worth reading, though Mr. Varga's statistical evidence also often lags behind his theoretical assertions. The material on the Soviet Union employs largely "percentage statistics" and other inconclusive methods, and very rarely takes into account such factors as efficiency or quality of production, housing conditions, or the transport bottleneck. This, however, may be the fault of Russian statistics rather than of Mr. Varga. The book teems with quotations, Stalin's speeches being a preferred source. Certain sections of the book are fairly objective, while others are written in the usual propagandist slang of the Comintern.

In accordance with Lenin and Stalin, Mr. Varga considers the Soviet system not a perfect communism but "socialism," or a preliminary phase of communism, with public ownership being achieved but the class struggle still going on. It can of course be objected that the usual conception of socialism is a different one, and that neither public ownership, nor increased production, nor abolition of unemployment appears in itself to be a sufficient yardstick of socialism—see the Nazi economy or even the war economy of Western countries; moreover, the growth of production during the industrialization of a backward country has almost everywhere been rapid, and it is even arguable whether an increased pace of capital accumulation is necessarily an advantage.

ALBERT LAUTERBACH

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IN BRIEF

COCKPIT OF THE REVOLUTION: THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE IN NEW JERSEY. By Leonard Lundin. Princeton University Press. $3.75.

In his Introduction to Mr. Lundin's book (Volume II in the Princeton History of New Jersey) Professor T. J. Wertenbaker writes, "Local in scope, his volume is national in its implications." But important as is the military history of the region, it is not allowed to obscure the picture of the locality. Following Beard, the author shows the economic motives behind the political divisions.

THE END OF THE ARMISTICE. By G. K. Chesterton. Sheed and Ward. $2.

This arrangement of essays and passages written at various dates between 1933 and Chesterton's death in 1936 and dealing with Hitlerism and attendant problems is really, for all its denunciation of Prussianism, a glorification of war. Starting his syllogism with a conclusion nobody now denies, shifting the middle term unobtrusively, casually alluding to a questionable premise as though it were an established link in an accepted argument, the author gives us what must be the best bad logic since the original sophists

DRAMA

A SERIES of very pretty little sets for "Romeo and Juliet" has been built upon the revolving stage of the Fifty-first Street Theater. That, however, is just about all that can said in favor of the new production. Even these pretty little sets are quite evidently hard to act in, and the two stars somehow manage to make Shakespeare's lyric tragedy seem a foolish and feeble play. Vivien Leigh is merely amiably inadequate—like a schoolgirl who has been majoring in elocution; Laurence Olivier is unfortunately a good deal worse than that. His voice is so cultured and polite that it carries the faint suggestion of a lisp; his strange posturings in tights are so deliberate and so exhibitionistic as to be almost indecent. His conception of the role—if conception it can be called—seems that of a ballet dancer, for he leaps continually about the stage and tops off every important speech either by some sort of pirouette or by extending his arms high above his head in a gesture which is not a lifting of the hands to heaven but a sort of voluptuous stretch. In fact, his whole performance suggests a star-crossed lover rather less than it suggests a young Tom in a bed of catnip. There have been times when I have agreed with those who maintained that any production of Shakespeare in which the lines could be heard was better than no production at all, but if I have ever expressed any such opinion in print it is hereby retracted.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

ART

The Genius of Mexico

IT CANNOT constitute the equivalent of a trip to Mexico, a visit to the Modern Museum and its brilliant summer exhibition of Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art. The masks and sculptures, feather-mosaics and paintings, textiles, gold and silver ornaments, lacquer work, and pottery composing the vast, rich, bewildering display are morsels detached from the natural conditions from which they sprang—the temples, churches, and houses that formed their background, the figures and habits of the people whose representations they are; and it precisely is through its gift of the ability to perceive relations between works of art and the totality of the milieu that travel provides its priceless experiences. Especially the southern baroque art appears to disadvantage in the museum, being insufficiently strong in point of form to impose itself without the framework of the ornate churches. Still, one may doubt whether a mere trip to Mexico, even the most observant, could afford a view of the sublime, the gay and terrifying art of Mexico in its last two thousand years more inclusive than the one given by this authoritative and systematic show. Many spaces as well as centuries are covered by the exhibits. Effectively the directors have disposed sundry of their items on miniature terra-cotta terraces suggestive of temple steps; others among tiny models of the Mayan pyramids or in settings of photographs of ecclesiastical architecture. Comprehensively they have represented the three great realms of art which, various in value and style but conceivably the expressions of one spirit and one strain or soil, have revealed Mexico's aesthetic gift or genius to the world.

Of these, the earliest and most important is that unequaled find of the research which of late years has drawn a new, profounder past about the race. It is the art of pre-Columbian America: its representatives fill the museum's ground floor and overflow into its sculpture garden. Several high, shadowy cultures speak in it: the gentlest, most archaic in the realistic clay effigies exhibiting a grasp of human peculiarities oftentimes humorous, sometimes beautiful, as in the young Hauxtec goddess of limestone. Somewhat younger appear to be the sculptural masks, stone yokes, palms in jade, obsidian, basalt generally called Totonac and notable for their noble, tranquil beauty of proportion and sensitive modeling. They are portions of a hieratic art, adjusting naturalistic detail to decorative motives; apparently a means of holding converse with sullen tropical gods and placating them in the interests of tribe survival. The monumental art stamped with the horror of death mainly is Aztec and mournfully fascinating at an hour when a new Aztec empire has risen on the banks of the Rhine. Yet much else of this pre-Columbian art reflects a lust to grasp and know the mystery of life-and-death. Still, what overwhelms is the splendor of the sculptural designs and abstractions. These Amerindian cultures left us art equal to the greatest.

Representatives of the second of the three realms honoring Mexico occupy most of Story II: they are examples of the polychrome religious statuary, the altarpieces, silver monstrances and chasubles, and the portrait-painting of the viceregal period which plunged the conquered land "headlong into Western civilization." Like the Mexican baroque or churrigeuresque architecture, the definitely baroque expressions in this group are both softer and more outlandishly opulent than their European models. The "barbaric pearl and gold" makes one feel the prosperity of the church and the luxury of the great families in this land of maize and mines—also the imagination and religious feeling of the Indians.

As for the third of the realms: it is not the modern mural and easel painting up on the third floor. Certainly these Mexican murals are more vigorous than our own. Orozco's line often has power, and easel pictures such as Fernando Castillo's and Rufino Tamayo's possess grace of color and design. The section as a whole none the less disconcerts with a feeling of effort and inflation. No, the third of the important realms

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is that of the folk art: the bright fiesta masks, carnival gimcracks, boxes, platters, lacquer work of the mestizos and Indians profusely flanking the colonial and "modern" exhibits. Frequently manifesting a skilful craftsmanship, these objects have an enormous gaiety —and a ferocity—quite their own. To their order must be added two happy groups of paintings. One of them is the group representative of the primitive painting which flourished after the liberation from Spain had broken the European tradition. This work is delicate and unaffected in design and feeling: one of its masters, José Maria Estrada, must be considered a great portraitist. As for the other happy group, it is that of the free and imaginative crayons and washes of the schoolchildren coached in our own time by Best-Maugard. PAUL ROSENFELD

MUSIC

IN THE quiet opening phrases of the Brahms B-flat Piano Concerto my ears detect saccharine—which is to say that in spite of the quiet there is excess in the feeling; and in spite of the quiet there is also straining for impressiveness. But at least though it is excessive the feeling is genuine; though there is straining for effect the passage is quiet. This passage, however, is broken into by agitated phrases from the piano, which for all their noise mean absolutely nothing—so that there is no reason for them either in themselves or in relation to what preceded. And this wholly arbitrary succession of attempts now at one artificially contrived effect now at another is what one hears in the entire movement; this combination of saccharine and bombast is what one hears in the rest of the work, and again in the C minor Symphony; and it was a whole evening of bombast and saccharine that Toscanini offered at his Carnegie Hall concert with the N. B. C. Symphony.

At this concert, moreover, one heard that quiet opening measure of the orchestra, which should continue with quiet figuration from the piano, continue instead with Horowitz's heavily struck, widely spaced low b-flats in figuration which picked up speed and tapered off to *piano*. And this distention and overemphasis one continued to hear in almost every phrase that he played until the last movement. It was a sort of stylistic elephantiasis which appeared to be Horowitz's way of measuring up to the big music he was playing. And to someone for whom, as for Mr. Downes, the work is "the greatest of piano concertos" the performance would indicate "impressively [Horowitz's] growth as interpreter." But I cannot imagine anything worse for the actual weaknesses of the work than this exaggeration of them, this piling of excess on excess. And one result was that in place of the extraordinary beauty of sound that Horowitz produces from the piano there was, in the first two movements, the harsh, jangling sound of all this pounding and crashing.

Nor did the thick, heavy orchestration of the two works permit Toscanini to produce, except for a few moments, the beauty of orchestral sound and texture that one would have heard if he had played music more worthy of the talents and energies that were wasted that evening. Some day Toscanini may forget about Brahms long enough to play the concertos of Mozart, and may forget about his relatives, his friends, his friends' relatives long enough to play these concertos with musicians as great as himself—with a Schnabel, a Szigeti.

The significance a piece of music has for us depends on how its sounds are brought into relation to one another in time and force; and it is in this respect that performances differ and that the differences may be important. There are works—Schubert's great C major Symphony is one of them—whose significance may be heightened and made more impressive by the performance of a Toscanini but cannot be destroyed by the performance of a Frederick Stock. So one may hear in the new Columbia set of this symphony made by Stock with his Chicago orchestra (M-403, $11), which in addition offers recording that is poorly balanced, excessively reverberant, and in other ways unattractive (and surfaces are annoying again). This is the poorest of the three versions of the work that are now available; and the best, I think, is still the Victor set made by Boult with the B. B. C. Symphony four or five years ago, which is also a little cheaper.

On the other hand, I know from Schnabel's performances the extraordinary significance that is in Beethoven's "Diabelli" Variations; but if I had had to judge by Egon Petri's performance at his recent recital I would have thought the work was an interminable bore. I stayed to hear Petri play the first two of Chopin's Etudes Opus 10; and what I heard in each was a tremendous bravura flourish at the beginning, followed by fussy nuances of pace that made things easier but apparently not easy enough for mere perfection in the difficult chromatic passages of No. 2. I have heard Petri do better: he played as a better musician in the National Orchestral Association's performances of Mozart's Concerto K. 537 and Beethoven's No. 5—though not as a musician of consistently good taste in the Mozart, nor as a great musician in the Beethoven; he has recorded some fine performances of Beethoven sonatas; and he does a brilliant virtuoso job in the trashy Liszt-Busoni Spanish Rhapsody, which he has recorded for Columbia with the Minneapolis Symphony under Mitropoulos (X-163, $4.50). This is the sort of music to which Mitropoulos's explosively dynamic style appears to be suited. Recording is excellent.

The Metronome All-Star Nine are excellent in the ensembles of "All-Star Strut" (Columbia 35389), and there are fine short solos by Stacy, Jack Teagarden, and a few of the others, but the rapid succession of these solo bits makes the record unsatisfying. There are also good solos in the Benny Carter "Sleep" and "Slow Freight" (Vocalion 5399). And enjoyable for a moment or two, but tedious for two sides, is the Basie piano style backed by the rest of the superb Basie rhythm section in "Dupree Blues" and "Red Wagon" (Decca 3071).

B. H. HAGGIN

CONTRIBUTORS

HAROLD J. LASKI, professor of political science at the London School of Economics, delivered one of the principal addresses at the recent Bournemouth conference of the British Labor Party.

CHARLES MALCOLMSON is a Washington newspaperman formerly on the staff of the Philadelphia *Record*.

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Letters to the Editors

Puerto Rico Pays

Dear Sirs: To your recent articles on Puerto Rico I should like to append this footnote to bring into the picture factors which will have a decisive influence on the destiny of the Island. No visitor to Puerto Rico can help noticing the activity in the harbor of San Juan. The airport at Isla Grande and the dredging and construction projects are plainly visible as the ship points its prow into Morro channel. Probably it occurs to few tourists to ask who is paying for it all. In these days of easy money for all kinds of projects, perhaps they take it for granted that some alphabetical agency in Washington is undertaking the construction of a modern Gibraltar here.

No one is happier than I to see San Juan coming back to something like its former self. From Drake in 1597 to Sampson in 1898 many have tried to capture the city, but none have succeeded. Yet enemy fleets could not leave that fortress behind and operate freely in the Caribbean. Some of us interested in national defense have been wondering for years when the army and navy would wake up and see what the Spaniards saw as early as 1533—that Puerto Rico is the key to the defense of the Western Hemisphere.

But leaving history aside, who is paying for the new defensive grandeur of Puerto Rico? The report of Governor Blanton Winship for the year ending June 30, 1939, says:

> The Insular contributions to the national defense program in Puerto Rico have been very substantial. Among them are: (1) Authorization by the Legislature of the cession if Isla Grande and adjoining reclaimed lands in Miraflores Bay, in San Juan Harbor, to the federal government for use as a naval base and for other naval purposes—value of this land is estimated at $10,000,000; (2) dredging San Juan harbor to provide a channel and anchorage base deep enough for heavy war craft; (3) construction of a runway nearly a mile long for planes at Isla Grande, and similar runways on Mona Island, Culebra Island, Vieques Island, and at other points in Puerto Rico; (4) construction of a large modern graving dock at San Juan. . . .

Governor Winship pointed with pride to this accomplishment. The War and Navy departments pat the Island politicians on the back. If the people of Puerto Rico share this satisfaction, it is at a price.

When the air base at Pensacola needs new runways or when the submarine base at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, needs dredging, the War and Navy departments do not ask the state of Florida or the state of New Hampshire to pay for it. And if they did, the governors of Florida and New Hampshire would certainly object to the unwarranted taxation of their people to raise money for such purposes, which should be paid for by the country as a whole. But the people of these states elect their governors. A governor of Puerto Rico appointed by the President of the United States is there not to take care of the interests of the island but, or so their duty has been interpreted by certain incumbents, by hook or crook to spend the Island's meager revenues on projects which to the Puerto Rican mean nothing.

Only one-third of the Puerto Rican budget is devoted to education. I wish you would ask Mr. Ickes what proportion is being spent for national defense. And ask the Puerto Rican Commissioner of the Interior how much extra money he is spending to widen insular roads so that anti-aircraft batteries and their trucks may have no difficulties in negotiating the curves. How much more will the maintenance of those roads cost after they have been subjected to the extra heavy traffic of military activities? The Governor forgot to thank the Puerto Ricans for that.

Admittedly the increased garrisons will benefit the Island by spending their pay there, but why not recruit there the men needed for those units? That would have been a great help—economically by taking hundreds of men off the relief rolls; culturally by giving them the opportunities for self-education that the army and navy have to offer.

RODOLFO O. RIVERA

Durham, N. C., May 14

Peace Lovers vs. War Lovers

Dear Sirs: I have often read Mr. Villard's articles with approval, but the one in your issue of May 11 is in my opinion sheer hypocrisy. I can tell him some reasons why Great Britain is not prosecuting the war with the "strength and ability of the Nazi machine," with the "dash, lightning-like strategy, and tremendous organizational ability" of the Germans. It is because the nation has been weakened by peace talk such as Mr. Villard advocates and by a belief in the League of Nations. It is because it had a Labor government which did absolutely nothing in preparation for war. It is because it has been under a Chamberlain-Tory-fascist government which has been friendly to Hitler.

It is certainly not consistent or reasonable for a man to preach peace and then profess such admiration for the efficiency of the dogs of war, to educate a nation to love peace and then expect it to fight a wild cat with the ferocity of a cave man, to expect a peace-loving nation to go into war with the stomach of a people who have been taught to love and glorify war. Let us at least be honest, and admire either the effects of a love of peace on a nation or the effects of a love of war, and not profess one and applaud the other.

ETHEL E. MIST

Windsor Locks, Conn., May 16

A "Must" Book

Dear Sirs: Your reviewer's description, in your May 4 issue, of Erika Mann's recent and important book, "The Lights Go Down," as a "kind of idyl of babes in the woods beset by marauding wolves" comes as a shock. Miss Mann presents a poignant and powerful picture of the effect of Nazism on all the people of Germany. Aristotle defined art as the expression of the general through the particular. Miss Mann, recognizing that generalized statistics bring home nothing to the reader, has chosen the method of art but first used painstaking scholarship to gather her facts.

This, I submit, is a "must" book. Anyone who is willing to open his eyes and his mind to the dreadful impact of Nazism on all the peoples in Germany should by all means read this book. It is not propaganda. It does not concern the Jews. It pulls up the curtain on Nazi Germany and shows the dreadful facts behind that curtain.

JAMES N. ROSENBERG

New York, May 17

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